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(a) 'Those from the south'

Those were the descendants of the leaders of the two main Ngoni groups represented by the two Nguni kingdoms, with their followers, who left Natal during the wars of Shaka. They were South-eastern Bantu of Nguni stock, and when they were first encountered by Europeans in Nyasaland, the Europeans called them Zulus and spoke of their language as Zulu. Ngoni informants in the 1930's who were regarded as most reliable repudiated their relationship with the Zulu, and always referred to their ethnic origin as a people of Swazi stock. Y. M. Cibambo whose knowledge of Nguni traditions was unrivalled, said in his book *My Nguni of Nyasaland*—'Very many of them [the Ngoni] came from Swaziland, which is north of Zululand'.[1] A nostalgic refrain occurred in more than one of their traditional songs:

> Come let us go to Swaziland
> Where the people die fat.[2]

Cultural affinities between the Ngoni in Nyasaland and the people now living in Swaziland and, to a lesser degree, with the Zulu, will be examined in several chapters of this book. In the chapter on clan descent names in Part III, we shall compare the clan names called Swazi by the Ngoni with the lists of clan names given by Bryant in *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal* [3] and with the list given by Kuper, in *An African Aristocracy*,[4] of the Swazi and pre-Swazi clans. The military organization of the Ngoni, the age-set system which formed part of it, and other cultural features which will be discussed in Chapter III of this section, all show a general cultural affinity with the peoples of the northern Nguni group of the South-eastern Bantu.

The separation of the Ngoni group from the parent stock, which took place at about the same time as the Ndebele and the Shangaan groups fought their way north, occurred before the Swazi and Zulu kingdoms took final form. It is more correct, therefore, to say that Ngoni cultural affinities were with the northern Nguni group as a whole than to say they were off-shoots of either the Zulu or the Swazi. The Ngoni themselves used the designation 'Swazi' for the people with clan descent names whose ancestors left the south with the original party. Some of the older men remembered their fathers and grandfathers speaking of their clan as having belonged to the Ntungwa group, the Mtetwa group, the Msane group, before the departure of the Ngoni took place. This differentiation into pre-Swazi tribal and clan groupings was not in the 1930's one to which the Ngoni gave much attention. In talking about their southern origin it was the Swazi connexion which they emphasized.

[1] Cibambo, Y. M. *My Nguni of Nyasaland*. Lutterworth Press, 1942, p. 8.
[2] Read, M. 'Songs of the Ngoni People.' *Bantu Studies*, March 1937, p. 10.
[3] Bryant, A. T. *Olden Times in Zululand and Natal*. Longmans, 1929, pp. 681–97.
[4] Kuper, H. *An African Aristocracy*. O.U.P., 1947, p. 233.

173 Ngoni tradition placed the departure of the two main groups under the leadership of Zwangendaba Jere and Ngwana Maseko during Shaka's wars, according to some traditions just before, and to others just after, the death of Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. The separate departure of the two Ngoni groups which later formed the two kingdoms was determined partly by their separate leadership under the Jere and Maseko clans, partly by their march by different routes to the Zambesi and after crossing it; and partly by the clan descent names of the Swazi element in the two kingdoms, which with few exceptions were different.

[533] Two traditional songs, sung at marriages, at dances at the Paramounts' villages, and the first in the church of the Scottish mission at Ekwendeni in north Nyasaland, reminded the Ngoni of their departure from Natal, of their separation from the Ndwandwe people under Zwide, and of the hazards of a small military band fighting its way northwards.

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All the nations
Are gathered together against us.
How shall we fight?
They are called together against us.
Whence shall we summon help?
The big husky ones, ho!
They are called together against us.
We are reinforced by whom?

It is because of Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people
That though I lie down I cannot sleep.
O Zwide, chief of the Ndwandwe people!
Though I lie down I cannot sleep.
Shaka scatters us among the forests of Soshangane land.

173 There were several informants in both Ngoni kingdoms who had preserved the story of the departure of the Ngoni from the south. Y. M. Cibambo in his book gathered together the traditions and gave what he considered the most authentic version of the departure. One [114] text from the northern kingdom is given here, partly because it was typical of the kind of material Cibambo had to work on, and also because the author, Mlonyeni Jere, had heard it from his mother who, as a young girl, had lived at the court of Zwangendaba. The text gives the genealogy of Zwangendaba, and the connexion of his line with Zwide, ruler of the Ndwandwe people. It emphasizes the immediate cause of Zwangendaba's departure—namely the fear of meeting Shaka and his warriors in open battle, and the fact that he was not called a chief until he had made a breach with Zwide. The summons to the [57] mourning for his uncle Mafu, which he ignored, was considered by the Ngoni to be the final act by which Zwangendaba cut himself off from

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CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NGONI KINGDOMS

After the Ngoni settled in Nyasaland their political system went through three main periods of change and development up to 1939. The first was that of pre-European days, characterised by the military kingdoms. The second was the period of direct British administration, when the chief features of the Ngoni kingdoms were latent and unrecognised. The third was the period from 1933 onwards when the passing of the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances gave recognition to certain traditional forms of the Ngoni political system. Since, in their early forms, from the middle of the nineteenth century onward, the Ngoni kingdoms were founded on conquest, the maintenance of military power both for defence and aggression was an essential condition of their survival. We shall therefore begin the examination of the Ngoni political system with a chapter on their military organization. Men of the Swazi and of trans-Zambesi clans were proud of the part their fathers and grandfathers had played in Ngoni wars. These wars were recalled to the people in the recitals of oral tradition and in the songs and dances which were part of Ngoni culture. Cihambo, who has already been mentioned as the historian of his people, wrote for me in English the following account of Ngoni warfare in the old days, part of which, written in Tumbuka, was used as a reader for the schools in the Livingstonia Mission area. Cihambo had, as a young boy, seen the preparations for war, and had gone more than once as a carrier for his elder brothers who belonged to one of the last formed regiments.

Ngoni Warfare in Old Days

¶ To the Ngoni war was like work and his heart rejoiced to think of it. When the old men sat in the kraal the talk that roused discussion was of war and their journeyings. All the heroes of the tribe had received their praise-greetings through service in war. In this, ordinary people and slaves came together, for though they might have been unknown to begin with, if they were heroes in one or two wars the whole country knew them. The slaves who showed their courage and strength in war quickly received their freedom and many also had villages of their own because of the people they had captured in war; others obtained the standing of men in authority. Those who were cowards were humiliated and laughed at, and those who had not entered the enemy stockade or killed a man were not allowed to dance in triumph in the kraal but only to join in the *Ingoma* dance along with others.

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Herding as preparation for war

Preparation for war began in youth. When boys were about ten or twelve they were sent to herd goats or calves; when they were older they herded the cattle. At this time the boys were in the bush with their elders who were often haughty and fierce. The older herders taught the boys how to fight and how to defend themselves. They taught them to fight with twigs and sticks; the older herders fought with *izinduku* (knobkerries) and *izinkhonjo* (wooden swords). They were not allowed to fight with real spears though some had them. The older herders stirred up the hearts of the younger to fight and taught them to strike each other with knobkerries and to use little shields. If the herders of one village met the herders of another, the bulls were teased till they fought, and the little herders also. The small herders were not allowed to say anything about the herding to their parents. The older herders also loved to fight as in war with those of other villages. At such times the older men and even the elders came out from the village to see the battle and to stir up the hearts of the boys. If the herders of one village ran away they were laughed at, but the winners were greatly praised.

At the time when the cattle ate the refuse in the maize-gardens, after harvest, fighting most often broke out. Some of the boys provoked their neighbours to go and drive the cattle into the maize-fields of another village deliberately. The custom was that cattle might eat in the maize-gardens of their own village and the boys ought to ask if they may go into the fields of others. The herders did this to annoy the other herders and to start a fight. Often a great struggle was the result and the young men of the village who had outgrown herding joined in the fight to help the youngsters of their village. But they did it sensibly, none caused a wound with a spear, for anyone who did that was punished by law.

So the boys grew accustomed to the first steps in fighting which would help them later in war. Those who knew how to protect themselves with a knobkerry and small shield had no scars on their heads, but there were many long ago who had scars from fighting in the herding time. Children of the chief were in the same predicament—if they could not defend themselves they were beaten by their herding companions and possibly got their heads broken. The flowing of blood was not considered very serious, only if one did it in a stealthy way then he had to pay compensation. In this way the boys grew up with stout hearts and loved fighting.

Another thing which excited the boys was the custom of whistling. The boys were very expert and quick in expressing changes of mood in whistling. This was done so that the cattle would go carefully or quickly, but also when they were fighting the herders loved to whistle and even the older men in war did so also. The whistling stirred up the hearts of those who were thinking of running away. There were many ways of whistling and some were very good at it.

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Enlistment

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When the young men reached the age of 21–26 they left off herding. Sometimes it was their fathers who stopped them, sometimes they themselves wished to stay at home. They took their shields (*amahawu*) and

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their spears and gathered together; they went to the kraal and began to dance the *ligubo* war dance. Sometimes they set themselves in order as though they were out on a raid; they came out at the right middle of the kraal and went *pa liango*, toward the gate, singing, marching, and shaking their shields and spears. Sometimes they retreated as though running from the enemy, then turned about as though running to meet the enemy again. This was done to show how they could fight and defend themselves from the enemy. It showed that the boys were now young men and of the warrior class, and they were asking to be admitted to the status of grown men. If the old men agreed that their prayer should be granted they were formed into a new regiment (*libandla*) and were given a senior to lead and govern them.

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The Army

All the war companies were under the Paramount. He had the power to call the whole army to go out against enemies. But all big villages and villages of men of reputation had their own companies, like Zulu Gama, Njerenjere Sibande and many others. These companies were under the war *induna* of the Paramount and when they were called they came quickly to the village of the Paramount which was the central meeting place. A *libandla* (company) was divided into *mabuto* (sections) sometimes of 100 or more. For each section there was an *induna* who led it in war, judged all disputes, and spoke for it to the war *induna*. The war *induna* was the eye of the Paramount in all that pertained to war.

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The army was divided into companies corresponding to the districts or chiefs' villages and all the company leaders were under the war *induna*. All the parts of the army were divided in lesser parts in accordance with the generation of the young men, *amajaha*, and the older men, *amadoda*.

Mobilisation

If desired the Paramount had power to send a summons through the whole country that his army should mobilise in his village in order that he might see it. The lesser chiefs had the same power for their districts. The man who delivered the summons went into the kraal and shouted that the Paramount wished the army to gather at the central meeting place. The message was spread everywhere. Then all the sections in the villages and in the districts of the lesser chiefs and clan heads hastened to come at the appointed time. The Paramount prepared cattle to be killed for the army. As the sections were marching in they sang the songs called *amabutho*. Section by section they chose their *mabuto* for arriving and entering the kraal and each section drew up by itself. An open space was left between the sections so that they might be known.

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When they had all gathered in their places the herald rose and shouted '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, usi, Ayigube*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, let them dance.' This was to tell the sections to begin the war-dance. Each section got up with one heart and made a wide circle and began to dance. One of them began a song which he remembered on the spur of the moment from the *ligubo* and led off, the whole section took it up waving their shields and thrusting with their spears now right now left according to their step and each foot stamping the ground.

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At the dance the warriors wore their full war-dress. Those who had the head-ring wore a little bunch of black feathers sewn together and attached to a skin and looking like a lion's mane, which came out from under the head-ring on the neck, and they tied a strip of other skin over their eyes. Those who had not the head-ring had their heads completely covered and at the side of their face they put rosettes of feather ends so that the head-dress should not hide their sight. The head-dress was of birds' black feathers, especially ravens; they took out the quills so that they were soft and they sewed them together on cowhide, the man's head resting on the skin. On the body and arms they wore a white skin of goat-hair, or a white belt with long hair, and twisted straps of skin reaching to the knee at the loins. The belts were made from the skins of white goats which had long hair and they stitched them. Round the loins they had whole skins of kids both front and back. Some tied *irishondo*, hides made to look like a tail, at the back. In their ears they had *isicase*, earrings of ivory, or sometimes of bone or wood. Truly they looked as terrifying as wild beasts when they stood up. So they ornamented themselves. The oldest of the men stuck a tail feather of a crane in the skin strip above the eyes.

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When the dance had begun the women rose to help the men. The Paramount's wives and wives of the men of standing wore the claws of lion and leopard on the top of their hair combed up on the crown and round the neck along with other beads. Ordinary women also wore beads on their heads and necks. All looked very well. Both men and women sang the dance songs and danced. The men spread out in a circle round the edge of the space; the women faced the men at a distance or perhaps they put them in the middle of the ring. All sang, the women commencing, the men joining in or responding. The women had little sticks or reeds in their hands shooting high up. Others came forward and went into the middle of the circle or half circle, and went singing and dancing and shaking their sticks and thrusting out their necks.

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When the dance was over the herald told the army to scatter to their villages until the provisions and snuff had been prepared, and on such and such a day they were to gather again in the Paramount's village. On the day of the gathering of the army they brought their dress and food, the sections dressing as they were in the kraal. The herald called again, '*Uyezwa na*', 'Do you hear?' '*Utsho njalo yenkosi, uti, Ayikote*', 'Thus saith the Paramount, fall in.' Then all the sections stood up, each by itself but now joined together in close order, shields and spears raised above them. Then the chief *induna* or someone else who had been chosen told them the enemy stockade which it was proposed to attack, and the plan of campaign. When the sections had formed they began to march out of the kraal one by one.

The whole day the sections had been kept in the kraal, no one was allowed to go to a house and say good-bye. Those outside were not allowed to greet the warriors inside. Children were kept out of the way, lest they should greet their fathers as they went out to war. If a man was greeted as he went out to war, the fear was that he would not come back but would die there.

When the army went out in the evening near sunset it slept near the

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village in grass-shelters opposite the kraal gate, and no one was allowed to go to a house or to be with his wife. They said that if a man broke this law the army would be unlucky. Even the Paramount if he still went with the army slept there outside. If the Paramount left for the war, his oldest *induna* left his own village and went to the Paramount's and stayed there till the army came back. In the royal village there was continence and all the people were ordered to control themselves in the villages, until the army left.

When the army went out the old men accompanied it, but after they had spoken words of warning they came back to the village. The chief point in it all was that the young men should have courage, and should help each other if one is wounded or there is any other difficulty, and should obey the leaders. They warned the leaders too to begin the fighting wisely and not on a bad or treacherous place. If a leader did that sort of thing and many were killed a case was brought against him. When the army went out two sections were detached to guard the village. These stayed at home along with the companies of old men. They 'kept the tribe', the Paramount and the old people and the stock.

[887]

The approach and attack

When the army went out it marched very slowly, and halts for the night were at short intervals. All the sections kept together as ordered by the war *induna*. In all the sections there were scouts to show the way for the army. In each section one or perhaps two were chosen and were put together to walk ahead and look carefully, and come and report any news, especially when they were in enemy country. When the army rested, the scouts went forward to see if there was any danger near. When the army slept in grass-shelters, one or two sections were sent to guard against danger both in front and rear. The army had provision carriers, that is, those who carried food and the coverings of the old men. These were boys and girls, sometimes women from their houses. These were not sent by the Paramount but each household chose its young people to carry the food. The section of the food carriers had another section to protect them when the enemy were attacked or when they went to meet enemies.

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When the army was near the enemy stockade the leader ordered them to sit down and rest before they attacked. At such a time the warriors puffed or smoked hemp. This hemp-smoking was preferred because it maddened the warriors and gave them hearts without fear in facing the enemy. In the enemy stockade the drums would be beating to show that their enemies were angry, but the army of the Ngoni sat and rested as though there were no enemy.

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When the army had rested, the war *induna* and the other *izinduna*, or the leader of this army (for all the armies that went out were put under one man of whom they said, the owner of this army is so and so) scouted to see the difficulties of the stockade and to choose a good place for attack.

When it had been carefully chosen and the *izinduna* had agreed together how the attack should begin, then the leader roused the army and began to dance his own praise-dance. The army responded to him. After

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539 726 he had danced before all the sections he began to call '*Uyezwa, uti, Aiyime ncgito*', 'Do you hear? Stand to arms.' Immediately section by section got up and rushed forward with noise and whistling deafening the ears. The warriors stood in crowds near the stockade and almost surrounding it. When the army was small, they stood in the shape of a young crescent moon. While they did so, they were blowing their horns and whistling to drown the noise in the stockade.

Very soon the message was heard: '*Utsho njalo yena, uti, Aziqwebane*', 'Thus it is said, let the bulls fight.' On these words the warriors ran at the stockade with one heart and a noise like wind and the country was filled with the tread of their feet. For a short time there would sometimes be silence, then a shout would be heard from a section: '*Nginga pakati: kuti loko*', 'I am inside: I of such and such a village.' The man who was first in the stockade would name his village. Then there would be heard, '*Nginawe, mnakwetu*', 'I am with you, comrade.' All the *izinduna* and warriors fought in their own sections but once the army was inside they began to ask for the name of the first man in and those who had been near gave the name of the heroes. So each *induna* knew all about what had happened in his own section before he met the war *induna*, and when the latter reported to the Paramount at home he could tell everything.

Return from war

539 727 Long ago all that was found in the village or stockade (goats, sheep and cattle) belonged of right to the man who had entered first. That was easy when they sent only one company to the attack. All the other things belonged to the finder. Afterwards when all the warriors went to the attack together, it was difficult to distinguish who had got in first and so the spoils went to the man who reached them first. The Paramount had [643] his portion of everything taken. Outside the stockade those who had taken cattle put aside two or three which they said were *amahloma ankosi*, the first taste to the Paramount.

On the return all who had dipped their spears in the blood of their enemies carried what the killed had been wearing and their weapons or bows. If a man had killed a woman he wore her things (that is her ornaments, bark-cloth, etc.). These things were done to fulfil a taboo. When [783] the end of the time of purification came, all those things that were worthless were thrown away or burned, but the beautiful things were kept. Only the very old people wore the clothes of the killed.

When the army was on the way home it looked for bones of animals and burned them and ground them fine like flour, and also made charcoal dust. On the day of arrival some flour was kneaded and bone dust and the charcoal dust each by itself. They painted themselves on the face and on the body. This custom was to show those who had speared an enemy in the fight.

When the army was near their own country the war *induna* chose some messengers to go and give the news of the fighting and the names of those who had been killed. These messengers went to the important *izinduna*, and from them the news went quickly to the Paramount, headmen, and elders. The women were not told quietly; even if a man knew that his son

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had been killed it was not permitted to show his grief before the army had returned and mobilized in the kraal.

When the sections marched back to the village the first sections to go out to war came last and the one that had been last now led the way. The army never entered the Paramount's village in the afternoon but in the morning or before midday. They did this because it took a long time to tell all the news of the war, so if the army arrived near the village in the afternoon they slept in grass-shelters outside.

When the army was ready to enter, the sections were set in order, each one told off to follow another and each one chose its own song for the entry. When they sang the warriors covered their heads with their shields, with their spears in the middle of the shields. While they were singing one warrior of the section would jump out in front and dance his own praise-dance and the others let him; when he had fallen into the ranks again, they took up the section-song. The songs sung at the entry to the kraal were called *imihubo*. These were different from *ligubo* for they were sung by mouth only, whereas a *ligubo* was sung with stamping of the feet.

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When the warriors marched on the cattle track there was heard a confused noise of singing and shouting praises. All the warriors marched very slowly as they sang, section by section but crowding together. When they came close to the gateway they stood and waited to let those who had not blooded their spears have their dance out, because once inside only the 'killers' might dance before the Paramount and the headmen. When they stood they were as though the kraal were built of men but they left a space in the middle for the Paramount and headmen to sit and watch. For a little time the warriors danced their own praise-dances and these were chiefly those whose bravery was well known.

After these had danced a little there was a shout for silence, and all kept silent waiting for the words of the war *induna*. He came out from the throng and began to dance while all the warriors responded to his war-cry or praise-names. After he had finished he began to tell the story. He began by saying that in such and such a section, so and so had been first to enter the stockade, or to throw a spear first which killed a man inside. In all the sections he went over those whose names had been taken by the *izinduna*; if he forgot anything or the name of a 'killer' he went and asked the *induna* of the section to help him. Whenever he mentioned a name, the warrior jumped forward and danced so as to be known to the Paramount and all the men. Then the Paramount and the headmen chose one of themselves to reply and thank the army; sometimes it was the chief *induna*. Before he began he also danced a little, then spoke praising or blaming. After he had finished he danced again and sat down among his peers. This the Ngoni called *ukudumisela impi*, thanking in respect for the army.

Demobilization and purification

When all was finished in the kraal the warriors scattered and went to their villages to take off all their war equipment and to put their shields on the *mpalane*, the resting place or bedstead of shields. Then they sat down by their big house and were greeted by their wives, parents, children and friends. The custom was the same as that on the birth of a child, the

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727 salutation being '*Amehlo amhlope*', 'Eyes are white', or '*Buyani*', 'Return',
[576] along with the clan name. The answer was '*Yebo*' also with the clan name. This was the custom in the houses where there had been no death. The warriors of a village where there had been a death, either in the village or killed in war, took off their equipment on leaving the kraal and went to the house of mourning.

The warriors' sections went to the head villages of their districts to tell the news and show themselves. Those of Ekwendeni there; of Echigodhlweni there; of Elangeni there; of Emcisweni there; but the sections from the villages of the *amakanda* went together first of all to show themselves
539 to the head villages and then went to their own villages. After the army
727 had broken up, those who had killed a man or had helped to kill a man
783 began a purification of four or five days for they were considered to be unclean. After the time of greetings in the village, the elders came with
[824] the bark of certain trees which had been ground or crushed and put it in a frying pan. The frying pan was put on three hearth-stones by the fire, and water poured on. When the water began to boil the men came and began to 'lick the medicine', first one hand and then the other. The first lick they spat out, then they swallowed some, and struck their palms on their knees and on their elbows. They jumped from side to side of the frying pan and as they did so, they said '*Po*'. This was said to drive away the spirits of the enemies whom they had killed because they were afraid that they might come to trouble them in sleep at night.

Very early in the morning they went to the river to wash off the paint, but they still wore the clothes of the men killed. This showed they were
[834] still being purified. They did not live with their wives or touch their children. When they returned from the river they tried to repeat the words they had heard their enemies say. Back in the village they took more of their medicine from the frying pan saying '*Po*'. After that they rubbed themselves all over with lime wash.

On the last day they went to the river again but when they had bathed they burned all they were wearing, or hung them in trees. Only the good things were left: cloth, ivory bracelets, bows and spears. The clothes of the killed they gave to the old people to wear. If water did not take off the paint on their bodies they rubbed on fat from cattle. Then the days of *taboo were completed, they were considered to be clean, and could live* with their wives and hold their children.

The decoration of heroes

539 After the warriors had been sent to the villages a short time passed,
703 then they were called again together to dance the *ligubo*. On that day bulls
[912] were chosen to be killed for the army. Each section received a bull and it was killed by the hero of the section. While it was being skinned and cooked all the companies were dancing. When the meat was cooked and taken off the fire all the army was busied with eating it, each company by itself. When they had eaten the warriors began to get up one by one to dance and leap before their Paramount. Then the heroes of the sections
[237] were presented with the horns of the bull killed for the section. The horns had had holes bored so that bark-rope could be drawn through and they

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were worn by hanging on the shoulder or neck. The bulls which were killed were called *izinkunzi za impi*, bulls of the army. The man who wore the horns and danced with them was known as a man of valour.

Often the Paramount called the men who had shown valour on many occasions to come to him. When he did so he first of all searched for a fine skin and called a man who was good at cutting out a shield. When the shield was ready it was given to the famous warrior. When he received it he began to dance with the shield while the Paramount and the people there saluted him with praises for his valour. The people in the kraal were told to greet the Paramount's hero and beat on their shields. That dancing was a dance of thanks to the Paramount.

Organization of Warfare

Cibambo's text brings out a number of points which emphasize that the organization for war was integral to the whole structure of the Ngoni kingdoms and to the peoples living within the kingdoms. We shall concentrate in this chapter on the political implications of the organization of warfare, and chiefly on the part played by the Paramount and his officers of state. The entire war organization was centred in the person and office of the Paramount. He was the commander-in-chief of the army, though most informants agreed he did not himself go out to fight. He claimed the sole right to make war and to declare war, but it is clear from early Europeans sources that private wars and raids did take place, and this effort to centralize and control all warfare appears to have been not wholly successful. The Paramount claimed the right to distribute all booty taken in wars, whether they were waged on behalf of the whole state or of a section of it. Through the exercise of this right he sought to suppress private warfare for private gain, but, according to Cibambo, he did not get all the booty taken, for the text mentions setting aside cattle for the Paramount.

If war was declared by the Paramount his village was the mobilization centre for the whole army. The sections of the army from the districts of the chiefs and the *amahanda* of the *alumuzana* assembled in the Paramount's village; there they danced *ligubo*, the war-dance; they went out from there to fight, and they returned there after fighting for the acclaiming of heroes and the distribution of the booty.

The Paramount worked through two leading office-bearers of the army. One was the big war *induna* whom he appointed and on whom lay the responsibility for planning the campaign and selecting the regiments for different tasks. It was he who bore the onus of ultimate success or failure. The other office-bearer whose activities the Paramount controlled closely was the chief 'doctor' of the army, the man who sometimes combined the role of diviner with that of administering 'medicines' to the army.

Finally the Paramount had the sole right of granting the head-ring to the men of a regiment who had served their time as warriors and were allowed to marry and settle down in their villages.

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The *inkosi* was all this time as if he were mourning and fasting. He was in the house. His body was painted with medicines, black, red and white; and round his loins was painted with black medicine. He was kept naked except for the cover of his foreskin. They fed him with the first-fruits mixed with medicines. They said that both the Paramount and all the people were fasting and under discipline at that time.

When the time for closing the *incwala* came, they again took the fruit *igumuzo* and threw it in among the dancers and called out '*incwala seimbonyiwe*', 'the *incwala* is closed'. Then the people began to separate and to go home, still with the songs on their lips, and on the way cutting juicy stalks of new maize and picking leaves of pumpkins, which meant that the new crops were set free.

These two fragments of the old *incwala* songs, which, like the war songs, were full of 'sounds' like *xi xi, ozi ya*, were the only ones preserved. They were known only by one or two old men among the northern and central Ngoni.

1. He comes the one who hates the chief.
   Did you not see him?
   You have seen him.

2. You who are rejected
   They are carrying him lightly
   To thrash him
   He, the stiff-necked one.

The Royal Shadow

The special relationship between a new *inkosi* of the Maseko clan and a member of the Ngozo clan was personal and individual. I have translated it as 'royal shadow', since in discussing the relationship with leading members of the Ngozo, Nzunga and Phungwako clans the word *mtunzi* was the one most frequently used. *Mtunzi* is the term used for the shadow of a person or object cast by the sun; also for shade from the sun; also in modern phraseology for a photograph, when it is generally used in its double form, *mtunzitunzi*. In the descriptions of this relationship there seemed almost a reluctance to use a definite term. The informants kept on saying that the Ngozo boy was *monga mtunzi*, like a shadow. While they enumerated the many things he did *with* the Paramount, they avoided giving him or his relationship any specific name.

This relationship began at the accession of a new Paramount and lasted until his death when the Ngozo man leaped on to the funeral pyre, and it was marked by certain special features. On the death of the old Paramount, and before the new Paramount was given the medicine for strengthening him, a boy of the Ngozo clan was sent 'to enter the chieftainship' with the Paramount. Many cattle from the herd belonging to the big house were given to the Ngozo family from whom the boy

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643 766 kingdom and from Portuguese territory arrived to mourn. The grave was made at the edge of the kraal and the kraal fence enlarged to take it in so that the cattle might walk on it.

643 174 In this chapter I have tried to bring together some of the chief elements in the position of the Paramount, and in the performance of his duties, which were remembered by the old men as having been characteristic of pre-European days. Some of these features, as I have indicated, had disappeared in the 1930's. Others survived and will be illustrated in Chapter V. Chapters III and IV on the royal women and on the officials in the kingdoms will illustrate the importance of the leading women in the Ngoni kingdoms, and the hierarchy of officials already mentioned in Chapter II of Part I.

643 533 The texts of the praise-songs which conclude this chapter are given because in the 1930's they were still recited in the royal villages and were a feature of all public ceremonies. Most of the allusions in the texts were obscure. Cibambo, who translated them for me and who consulted other older men, did not recognize some of the names or the meaning of the attributes. Some names corresponded with those given in Part I in the texts about the departure of the Ngoni in their two groups from Natal (see pp. 7, 8), such as the Nqumayo people whom Zwide ruled over, Nqaba who left with Ngwana, Nyathi who tried to prevent Ngwana from leaving. But in the way in which they were used in the 1930's these praise-songs had little meaning for those who heard them except as a form of salutation to the Paramount.

Praises of Zwangendaba, son of Hlacwayo

643 533 ● 539 Zwangendaba whose intention it is to be black who denies it to be light.
Go away, let us go, you the rejected one.
We are like a man of the Ntungwa, a fat one; there the people die as fat ones.
Nqaba you must eat people. Leave the cattle.
Nqaba son of Lushwana, there was confusion.
There he is, there he is, where do they see him? They see him in the fences of his mothers.
One who is angry because the cattle have gone with the calves.
His great cunning overcomes the magic stones of the doctors.
I have gone away until I have seen Lebombo Mountains.
We are suffering on account of the great dispute with the Nqumayo people.
You are seeing the hoes which are waiting for you, the hoes which cannot be used for hoeing.
He saw it, the short grass, he was biting it hastily.
He saw it, the ditch, his foot slipped into it.
He who divided the water with a stick at the Zambesi.
He who remembered the cattle of the Balunjana.

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Praises of Hlacwayo, son of Magangata

Hlacwayo the dwarf who cannot trail his cloth
Whereas the tall people trail their cloths.
Meat eaten with knives of axes,
If it is not eaten with forks it is rotten.
Hlacwayo whose bodily vigour is finished off compared with Hlacwayo of former times.
Grass of deep red colour is not burned with burning; it burns very slowly, drop by drop.

Praises of Ngwana, son of Goqweni

You who cut the trees and who cut the mouths,
You the locust, the grasshopper who fixed in your hair the feathers of the locust,
Who went below and climbed up, and went to bring the morning star of the dawn,
You go, since you are rejected; you go and bring the armlets of wild animals; those of cattle will be much disputed.
You who remember the fault of long ago.
In descending, you descend together into the mountains.
You who drank the blood of cattle,
You who separated from the people of Shaka, Shaka of Mbelebele kraal,
You who separated from the people of Nyathi the son of Mashobane; it thundered, it was cloudy.
Thou resemblest cattle which were finished by wolves.
You who originated with the people of Mzilikazi,
You who originated with the people of Mpakana son of Lidonga,
You who originated with the people of Ndwandwe.

CHAPTER III

THE ROYAL WOMEN

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An early traveller in central Ngoniland in 1886 remarked on the number of 'true Ngoni women' to be found there, who were 'easily distinguished from the other women by their light colour and by being taller and stouter'. He went on to say: 'The king's houses at Livisini were 30 feet in diameter, built within an enclosure with other huts where the attendants lived. All were kept very clean and well swept.' This tribute to the appearance and achievements of Ngoni women of high rank was borne out by my own observations in the 1930's in central and northern Ngoniland. There was a definite physical type, light in colour, with high cheek-bones and orthognathic profile, tall with an upright carriage of the head. Women with these physical characteristics were in all cases of leading Swazi or trans-Zambesi clans, and their influence on their

an *isanusi* today". When he entered the place of his sister, NaNdumbu, he was dreaming. If there was a war he could say "You must not go to that war because all the people will be killed." He was just dreaming and dancing his *isanusi* dance. When he danced that dance on the chief's *bwalo* the people praised him with special praises.'

Two informants remembered fragments of the songs sung by NaNdumbu and her brother, and these songs were also sung by the old *izanusi* in the northern kingdom. I give here the Ngoni versions with an English translation, omitting the repetition of lines and the 'sounds' which accompanied the singing:

Uyezwa mihlolo	Do you see the omens?
Inkanyezo ipuma	The star comes out,
Ipuma yanga	It comes out in the East.
. . . . .	. . . . .
Ubaba uyangibiza	My father is calling me.
Hamba ekaya	Go home.
Indaba zikuyandela	Things have turned against you,
Hamba ekaya	Go home.

Although these diviners acted at times on their own initiative, this did not prevent their being called on in time of crisis to diagnose the reason for disaster or sickness. *Izanusi* who used their own medicines to smell could prophesy and speak on their own initiative as well as waiting to be called on. These medicines were said to induce the dreams on which the prophecy was based, and they were generally contained in the tail of a gnu or in a sheep's horn, or some other horn.

Below this category of the prophets, whether *abantu benhloko* or *izanusi*, came those who used lots when called on to diagnose a particular situation. These were often men who dreamed, or who used their own medicines to receive messages from their ancestral spirits, but instead of announcing their message directly, they brought with them some form of lots which they used when they were consulted, and gave their diagnosis as a result of observing the lots. Sometimes they sang their own songs, accompanied by dancing, which led to an almost trance-like condition; sometimes they used their lots without any previous working up of an emotional state through song or dance. I never met any of the dreamer type of prophet who used no medicines and no lots. There was general agreement among the Ngoni that they had died out, that their main service had been in times of war, and that the number of men or women who possessed such powers had, even in the past, been very small indeed. I did, however, see one diviner at work who used the song and dance technique with the lots, and two who used the lots without song or dance.

The *isanusi* whom I saw in the northern kingdom was divining for sickness at the request of a party of people who had come to consult him

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769 782 more were driven out of the kraal before the invocation of the spirits, one had been selected for the sacrifice, and the spirits' attention was drawn to this animal. They were reminded that it was their beast because it belonged to the herd of the house which guarded their spirits, and it was also their beast because it was to be killed and its meat offered to them if they showed agreement.

The third part of the prayer was mentioning the needs of the person on whose behalf the spirits were being addressed. The following words were used by Lopati Nzunga when he spoke this prayer to the spirits when Bambo Manga was ill:

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O thou Gumede!
O thou Mputa!
O thou great chief!
Here is your beast.
That your child may be healed,
Look on what is yours.
May you remain well
And your child recover.
We do not know,
We do not know.
If you say that she will die,
She is yours, this child of yours.
It is your affair.
As for us, we long that your child may recover.
If she dies, this child of yours,
We can only speak your names.
We cry to you for her.

769 782 Bambo Manga was there and her daughter and Chief Njolomole, and while Lopati Nzunga addressed the spirits, the rest murmured the names '*Wena Gumede*', '*Wena Mputa*', and added '*Mntwanayako*' (your child), '*Inkomoyako*' (your beast). The form of the prayer varied, and might be a sequence of address and petition as in this one, or a series of ejaculations with little consecutive thought. It depended on the eloquence and skill of the speaker of the prayer, and that form of eloquence was a well-recognized characteristic among the Ngoni. In the central kingdom before the Europeans came, the head of the Phungwako clan had addressed the spirits of the Maseko Paramounts. Since the Phungwako chiefs had separated from Gomani's kingdom, the Nzunga clan performed this ritual for Bambo Manga in their head village. In addition to speaking the prayer, the same man had to see that all was done in order, the cattle driven out, the chief people assembled, and the subsequent action taken in accordance with the sign given by the spirits, either to kill a beast for sacrifice, or to find out from the diviners why the spirits had failed to agree. When the spirits 'refused' the first time Lopati Nzunga addressed them, he concluded the proceedings by gently

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reminding the spirits that all depended on them. There was no tone of scolding in the words but a respectful plea for attention and help. 769 782

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Alas O Paramount,
Alas O Father,
Why do you refuse us?
What do you say about your child?
We say we are your people,
Alas O Paramount.

In prayers for rain the same form of address was used with the three parts of the prayer. The ancestral spirits addressed were those of the line of the Paramounts, since the needs of the whole country were involved. The beast chosen for the offering to the spirits was a black one with no white markings, and in place of the sick person's name, the need for rain was mentioned. In the account given by Mlonyeni Jere (quoted in the first chapter of Part IV) he used this formula, mentioning the names, presenting the cow, and then asking the ancestral spirits to tell UMkulumqango how greatly they were troubled through lack of rain.

The ritual of sacrificing to the spirits

The essential equipment in the ritual of sacrificing was the spear with which the beast was killed; baskets, both the wide winnowing basket (*lichero*) and the food basket (*nsengwa*); the wooden dish (*ngcwembe*) on which the meat was placed; and the gourd cups for beer. These have been mentioned already in several contexts as the sacrificial vessels or ritual objects connected with the ancestor cult and kept in the hut of the woman who was guardian of a particular ancestral spirit. In the northern kingdom one of the Nhlane clan who carried out the ritual for sacrifices to UNdina Nhlane at Hoho said that in the hut of UNtani Nzima who died in Swaziland, but whose house had continued, was a spear, a black cloth for rain-making and a wooden meat dish. These were kept on the right-hand side at the back of the hut, and no one passing by could stand erect; he had to bend his back and head 'as men do when passing the *inkosi*'. Since the coming of the missions these had been thrown away. 769 778 782 [415]

In the central kingdom I saw in several houses this collection of ritual vessels. There was always a spear, a food basket, one or more gourds for beer, and one or more of the wide, flat, winnowing baskets on which uncooked flour was carried and which was used for meat if there was no wooden dish. These were kept at the back of the hut hanging on the wall, above the place where sacrificial meat was laid.

The first stage of the ritual sacrifice was killing and flaying the beast. It was killed either in the kraal or just outside the fence, with a thrust from the spear, or more than one if necessary, by some member of the leading clan. At the time of the sacrifice when Bambo Manga was ill 769 782

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respect to all adults, whether Ngoni or not, whether of their family, or helpers in the household, or former captives. If children did not so behave to old and poor people, they were punished and made to feel ashamed as if they had failed to honour their own relatives.

A Ngoni elder when speaking of the testimony of early travellers in Ngoniland to the good manners found in Ngoni households said: 'Such honouring of each other came to the Ngoni because they liked living together without any scattering as was the custom of other Nyasaland people. . . . . Such honour was not shown by young people for fear of being beaten, but because all children were well taught that this behaviour was right and proper for the upbuilding of the land.'

The emphasis in this quotation is clearly on the connexion between personal behaviour and the integrity and prosperity of the Ngoni kingdom. When Ngoni elders were talking about child training and its effect on the future of the Ngoni people, they made constant reference to 'those who spoil the land'. The phrase was the same as taking the roof off a hut, i.e. destroying it for the purpose for which it was built. This determined emphasis on behaviour illustrated the Ngoni intention of regulating personal contacts within their society, so that harmonious relations would build up the society which quarrels and factions would destroy, and indeed had partly destroyed in some of the historic secessions from the kingdom. Harmonious personal relations are perhaps the covert if not the overt aim of all human societies from the individual family outwards. We see this however in sharp outline in Ngoni life, partly because they were acutely aware of the vulnerability from external influences of their society and way of living.

Two very ancient folk-tales illustrate Ngoni thinking about keeping their kingdom and society intact and maintaining their code of polite behaviour.

The first was taken down by me from a very old man who

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115 had heard it from his grandmother. She had been a young
539 Ngoni woman at the time the Ngoni crossed the Zambezi,
929 and hence this story was said to have had its origin in the Ngoni former homeland in Natal.

The story of Heva

539 At the beginning of the creation of the world there was a woman of reddish colour whose name was Golela, and she had two children. The name of the older one was Heva, and of the second one Malusi. My grandmother, Madakacha, said that Malusi was the cause of our herds of cattle becoming smaller. When Malusi was herding cattle on the river plains where they were feeding, he kept on disturbing them and driving some away from the rest.

At this time Heva was staying with his mother. Her work was to keep watch over the sun so that the birds did not peck it, and Heva helped her by flapping away the flies which were troubling her.

Their mother Golela asked Heva, 'Where is your brother? What is he doing?' Heva replied, 'There he is yonder, disturbing your cattle on the river plain.' Then Golela called Malusi and said to him, 'Go. Choose what you want and depart. Go with them far away. What is left here is for Heva.'

After Malusi went away, all that remained on the river plain belonged to Heva, including the animals and the birds and the crops, but the cattle were reduced in number.

My grandmother used to say about this story, 'We who are descended from Heva are the victims of this separation between the brothers. Because Malusi in the beginning of the world took away many of the cattle of his mother's house, we have never had large herds of cattle since then.'

The Ngoni saw in the archaic form of this folk-tale several meanings. It was one of their traditional creation myths. It supported their belief that they were once owners of vast

herds of cattle. It emphasized the relationships between brothers in their mothers' 'house', and the vesting of the rights over cattle in the male members of the house. But the chief reason why it was told to the children was as a warning against quarrels between brothers, which led to their separating from each other and dividing the property of a house instead of keeping it intact.

The second folk-tale was always known as the story of Brass-Rod, the translation of the name of the elder sister.

The story of Brass-Rod

A certain chief had two daughters. The name of the older one was Ntonga-ye-Tusi, and the younger one was Mbikazi. Ntonga-ye-Tusi, because she was the daughter of a chief, wanted to go and seek in marriage a chief who had a country of his own. So she set out on her travels, leaving her younger sister at home. When she met crippled people on the road, she was polite to all of them, and helped them and made them comfortable.

When she arrived at a certain place she went to the men of the village and they asked her, 'What have you come here for?' She replied, 'I want to seek a chief in marriage.' The man said, 'Well, our chief is a snake, but don't be afraid. When he visits you in the hut he will come with a whistling wind.'

They made her enter a hut and she stayed there quietly saying nothing, while they prepared for the wedding. Suddenly she heard the wind and knew it was the coming of the chief. The chief asked the elders of the village 'Whose wedding are you preparing for?' They said, 'It is for your wedding O Chief and yonder is your bride.' Ntonga-ye-Tusi stayed silent in her hut. She 'sewed up her heart' and was brave. Suddenly the snake-chief entered the hut and coiled round her body and put his head on her heart, saying to himself, 'Let me listen. Perhaps she is afraid.' But she was not afraid.

● 539 So they took each other in marriage. The people told her, 'Now then, give him watery gruel for his food and put it for him in the fire hole.' When the gruel was poured out there, he sucked it up because he had no teeth.

Some time after this Nsonga-ye-Tusi rose up to go and see the people at her home. When she got there her younger sister saw her fine clothes and was jealous of her. She said to herself, 'I too am going to the place where my big sister went to get married.'

So Mbikazi rose up and went on her travels. But she treated badly all the crippled people she met, and did not pity those who were carrying heavy loads, and used insulting language to many. When she arrived at the village of the chief who was a snake, the people received her politely and made her go into a hut for the wedding. They told her, as they had told her sister, that she should 'sew up her pants' and not be afraid because the chief was a big snake who came with a wind. When the chief came Mbikazi did not receive him quietly as her sister had done. She ran to and fro in the hut and cried out 'Alas! Alas! What have I found?' Then she trod on the tail of the snake-chief and he was angry and said, 'In what manner have you come? Have you come with insults to call me names and to tread on me?' He caught her and beat her so hard that the village elders begged him to spare her. So he left her in the hut.

When Mbikazi cooked gruel for the chief, she was careless and left a lump in it. The chief sucked his gruel but the lump stuck in his throat and choked him. He wriggled and fainted. The girl ran away, but the people of the village gathered round him, lamenting. Then the small lump came out and the chief recovered, and said, 'Where has she gone?'

He went after her until he reached her home and there he coiled up near the well. When the women went to draw water, they threw down their pots and ran away, and reported that there was a wild beast at the well. Nsonga-ye-Tusi wondered if it could be her husband, so she went to

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the well and sat near her husband, and they touched hands 539
and saluted each other.

At first the village people ridiculed Ntonga-ye-Tusi because she had played such a trick on them and had gone off and married a wild beast. But she paid no attention and took her husband into her hut.

Then the village people said to her, 'We want to make your husband all right, so that he may stand upright. Don't be afraid and don't weep'—for she was already weeping, fearing that they might harm her husband.

They made the chief go into another hut and they shut the door and set fire to the hut and burned it. His bones burst asunder, and they picked them up and put them in a pit with a gourd full of oil and some iron rattles. Then they sat beside the pit. Suddenly they heard the rattles ringing far down inside and they hurried to take off the stone covering the pit. They saw coming out of the pit a good-looking man of a very handsome red appearance, wearing a head-ring.[1] They acclaimed him and said, 'Here indeed is our son-in-law.' This chief was courteous and well clad. He became the husband of Ntonga-ye-Tusi, later he married Mlikazi also.

This story had many allusions to Ngoni culture past and present. The emphasis on 'red colour' here, as in the story of Hova, recalled the Ngoni belief that they were originally a red, not a black, people. In old days, chiefs' daughters sometimes chose their own husbands, so Brass-Rod and her sister were following an old custom. When the snake-chief, after his transformation, married the younger sister, it was as a subsidiary wife, called by the special title of *ukuzeza*. Such a marriage to a sister of the first wife was regarded as a compliment to the parents of the girl and a recognition of their careful training of the first wife.

[1] The head-ring was the distinguishing mark of the warrior who had served in the army and was allowed to marry.

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539 867 The moral, which was always repeated at the end as part of the story, was that children were warned not to show unkindness to people but to treat them well so that people would bless them. They were reminded that the older sister showed the qualities of pity, courage and obedience, while the younger sister did not hesitate to display disgust and fear and carelessness. It was the older sister who had her ultimate reward as leading wife of a handsome chief, while the younger sister, as a subsidiary wife, had to take second place.

These two folk-tales were popular among the children, even though they were so different from the animal folk-tales, full of humour and absurdities. The children used to shiver with excitement over the Brass-Rod story, especially the little girls, and the boys sucked in their breath when the wind blew and snapped their fingers for the rattling in the pit. Because the stories were serious and had a didactic purpose, Ngoni fathers approved of them, and encouraged the grandmothers to tell them often in order that the children might remember the moral.

Learning how to behave

203 957 [202] Ngoni villages, like the whole Ngoni kingdom, had an efficient system of communication between individuals and groups, but whereas the kingdom had a network of official messengers continually moving between the capital and the outlying sections, the village 'intercom' depended on the children. At any time of day, from first light till after dark, children were moving about the village from one hut to another, from a hut to the kraal gate, taking messages, summoning people, carrying food, reporting arrivals. The messages and summons were all at the bidding of the adults.

576 957 867 202 When a child was called to take a message, he had to respond immediately wherever he was, and run to hear what he was wanted for. Someone calling a child's name, followed by a long drawn out 'Yo—o—o', punctuated all the hours of daylight in a village. When a child was told to call someone

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854 When the baby cried, and it was not time to take him to
595 his mother for suckling, the nurse girl jogged him up and down on her back, and walked to and fro with him endlessly, crooning little lullabies to soothe the baby. Some of these lullabies were traditional, handed down from the older women, others were improvised by a nurse girl or copied by her from another.

589 Two traditional lullabies, well know in the Northern Ngoni kingdom, were as follows:

Hush my child;
Never mind, never mind,
Hush my child;
Never mind, never mind,
There is a busybody gossiping
There is a busybody gossiping
Ho! We reap the maize

Khalumo, Khalumo, son of Makhumphumo,
What are you carrying?
I am carrying the food of the baby
For someone may go about defiling it
In the dark paths.

The following is an example of an impromptu lullaby which I heard from a nurse girl in the Northern kingdom:

Bu, bu, bu, bu,
The baby cries for its nurse and not for its mother.
Bu, bu, bu, bu,
She is coming to make gruel for the baby.
There she comes,
Bu, bu, bu, bu;
The baby sleeps.

853 The reference to the baby's food in two of the lullabies belongs to the second special feature of Ngoni infant care, the provision of baby food to supplement the mother's milk, and the arrangements for artificial feeding if the mother had

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himself, with his eyes rather anxiously on the elders, lest he should take too large a lump, or get the relish all over his hand and wrist instead of only on his finger-tips. He learned, however hungry he was, not to stuff himself, and not to eat noisily. If he smacked his lips and gulped audibly, someone in the circle might say: 'I hear the guns of the Tyandile people booming.' They all stopped eating and looked at him, and he learned that a proverb could be a veiled rebuke, and he hung his head, ashamed.

Sometimes the smaller children had cow's milk or curds and whey or thin gruel given to them in a tiny gourd between the main meal-times, and through the day nurse girls and older sisters gave them little snacks if they thought of it or if the child whimpered because it was hungry. A favourite snack was ground bulrush millet, creamy and nutty to taste. Throughout this period spent in the women's world the child did not lack food either at or between meals. As he grew more mobile and independent, he went foraging in the compounds of his other mothers and his grandmothers, especially if his own mother had gone to her garden. They always welcomed him and gave him something to go on with.

After set meals the child was made to rinse his mouth, and his hands were cleaned by his nurse girl and his face and chest washed if he had covered himself with food fragments. His nurse girl found him a 'tooth-brush twig' and frayed it for him, and taught him to use it after meals as well as in the early morning.

Washing of small children was always done in the compound. While some children squirmed and yelled when washed, others liked it. They sat grinning on the veranda while their mother or nurse splashed water over them, rubbed soapy leaves on their hair, dried them with a cloth, and rubbed cow's fat on their skin. The Ngoni children in well-ordered households shone with cleanliness till they were about six years old. Then the boys dodged these female attentions, their skin became dry and scruffy, and their hair fell

3: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1960
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potatoes or ground-nuts. Round their fire when dusk came on, the boys who were under fourteen asked each other riddles. The children, for girls did it in their own groups too, called riddles 'our lovely sitting game', 'our lovely wise sayings for little children', 'our wise sayings which were puzzles'. The use of riddles and their enjoyment was confined to children between about seven and fourteen, never older, and was only a game for after dark, never played in daylight. About the age of fourteen they suddenly dropped them, and if asked about them said, 'Yes, we once played at riddles, when we were young'.

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Here are a few from the vast number of riddles known to the Ngoni children:

The live thing bore a dead thing and the dead thing bore a live thing—the fowl and the egg. [539

A large garden reaped into the hands—a man's hair.

My mother's food is sweet and cool in the morning and the evening but hot at midday—the sun.

What is it that goes on four legs in the morning, on two at midday, and on three in the evening?—a man, who crawls on hands and knees in childhood, walks erect when grown, and with the aid of a stick in his old age.

The hut of my mother has no door—an egg.

The little birds drink at one well—the roof rafters which meet at the top.

The roof is leaky—a basket-work beer-strainer.

Sitting round in a circle so that they all faced inwards towards each other, the children flung these riddles into the group, sometimes expecting anyone to reply, sometimes pointing at one child and addressing the riddle to him: 'There, there. Listen.' They jeered at slow and inept replies, and applauded quickness and correct answers. It was clear that riddles were partly a test of intelligence and of memory, partly a play on words with a humorous twist in question and answer, and partly a test of alertness to catch the meaning

4: Barnes E-5 (1946-1949)1951 FR5 Ngoni FR5
Mpezeni

easily. Paramount Chief Mpezeni III, in a Christmas broadcast in 1948, addressed to Ngoni workers in the towns, said

> Think not that I divorce your wives merely when they come to court. I do so when I see you send no money or clothes or you stay away for more than five years, not writing or sending anything to your families. I do this when they come to see me, both she and your parents. You do no good to your families by forgetting them all when you are in a strange country.

The grounds on which divorce is granted are more or less the same in the court and the village, but although the court, like the village assembly, thinks of itself as being primarily concerned with 'teaching people to live well together', it is also, unlike the village, concerned with reinforcing the power of the Native Authority bureaucracy and upholding the authority of the chiefs. Hence the court gives greater weight to the formalities of marriage and the theoretical rights inhering in the different payments. The chiefs, councillors, assessors, clerks, and police who make up the court are all men, whereas in the village meeting old and important women give their views and they are listened to with attention. My impression is that women are less favoured in the courts than they are in the village.

The law that the legalization payment shall be not less than thirty shillings was agreed to at a meeting of chiefs and their supporters in about 1944. Informants said that the law was introduced so that women as well as men could be punished for their adultery. It was argued that in a marriage in which no bridewealth had been paid, and only a few shillings as the legalization payment, the woman's kin could not in equity be called upon to pay damages on her behalf to her husband when she committed adultery. Adultery was thought to have increased, and women were as much to blame as men. By making the legalization payment a considerable amount, equal at the time to two months wages, it became possible to punish the woman in the same way as her lover. As we have seen, not everyone keeps this law, and women are married with a smaller amount as legalization payment, or with no payment at all. It is held by some people that a marriage certificate will not be issued unless at least thirty shillings legalization payment has been handed over, but in fact it is still possible to get a certificate when some smaller sum has been paid. In the light of developments in other tribes of the Eastern Province, it seems likely that before long thirty shillings legalization payment will become necessary before a certificate can be obtained.

One copy of the certificate is given to the man and another to the woman. With the help of her certificate, and of letters from her husband showing he is calling her to join him, a woman can get a pass from the court allowing her to buy a ticket on the bus going to the railway line or to Nyasaland. These certificates have therefore considerable value, and one woman's pass may be used by another

6:Ratray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

the pounder of the ordeal poison opens his monkey-skin wallet, pulls out the poison bark, and breaks it off into the mortar with a hippo's tooth. When he is chipping it off, he does not finish all the bark he has in his hand, he chips off a little and leaves the rest. When he is doing this the bark jumps, and falls on the left, and again on the right. They surely know that here to-day wonders will befall and that men will die and women. Then the medicine man says, "Give us men to go and draw water." Then the old man asks, "How many men shall we bring?" And perhaps he says, "Bring three, because the people are many," and the doctor tells them, "You must not glance behind, but just draw the water and return." (Lest they give warning to the flesh-eaters.) When he has finished cutting down the bark, he bids his attendant "begin to pound." They do not pound the poison bark as they would grain, they pound, thud! thud! and turn the pestle in the hands. While the attendant is pounding, the pounder of the bark keeps tapping, tat, tat, tat, on the mortar, with his monkey stick [which monkeys use for digging roots], and chants—

IV. "You have heard mother of children,
Mother of children of *Kundawwa*.
Indiscriminate slaughter is the game war plays,
It slew the baboon at *Bonpwe*,
When you slay let your victims fall backward and not forward.
Bag, make the poison hear my words.
You are come into the village, you are their advocate.
They say, that here so and so and so and so have died.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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It is to plead for them you have been summoned.
There they are, she of the house of the Hills, and he of so and so's clan.
She of the Hills, it is she who has taken the basket.
He, the man, took the little sharp knife,
If it be not you, on the spot, on the spot, you must vomit,
If it be you,
Oh slay, slay, slay."

When they come with the water, the medicine man takes a water-jar full, and pours it into the mortar. You can hear the froth come foaming up, and then he draws a cup of the poison and struts about stirring it with his monkey stick, and uttering this incantation—

"Pick them out, pick them out, pick them out,
You see only the morning's sun, its rays when sinking in the west you must not see.
Are you not that one?
You went to Zomba,
You beat the drum,
It was heard in the 'Never-reach-there country' of the fly,
The spurred fly,
There is a squint-eyed lizard there.
If it were not you who beat that drum,
You must vomit.
If it were you,
You must die.

V. "You went into the regions of the air,
You captured a ray of the sun,
You likened it unto a girdle,
Saying, 'Do you be my strength,
That when the poison comes,

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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You will give me the mastery over it,
I shall win,
This girdle do you sever, sever, sever.'
You swallowed the egg of a fish-eagle,
That the poison when it came might become as naught,
This egg you must smash.

"You took the spleen of a crocodile,
You laid it in your heart,
You took a python's belly,
You swallowed it, that power might be yours,
Do you [my poison bark] rend these.

"You took WAX,
You smeared it on your feet,
Going in your neighbours' fields,
Going with stealthy tread to gather up his grain,
To dust off again in your own garden,
Your companions are in want,
You have wealth to overflowing.

VI. "When you see your neighbour's child,
You say, 'Why should he walk thus at large?'
But surely I had better have eaten him
He who thinks thus shall enter here [into the mortar].

"The broken gourd-cups off the grave you beat together, that they might turn into snakes.
Was it not you who sang the song, saying,
'If it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy, if it be large and heavy,
They go about rolling it,
If it be small and light, they just lift it' [the corpse].

6:Rattray E, G-8 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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Was it not you who sang so?
I seem to think I heard you.

"That little razor have you brought it now?
No, I have forgotten it [supposed answer].

"Maiden, beautiful maiden, E! E! E!
You took the arm-bones of the children of men,
You used to go and dance with them,
The squint-eyed lizard is on his seat, and
Sounding the drum,
Wheeling ever one way.
Now in the opposite direction, see they have
rent the drum.

"There is a thing that walks by night,
There is something that comes by day,
It has seen him."

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VII. "No, to-day we have met each other, the boundary is there, from the east to the zenith is yours, from the zenith to the west is mine alone." He kneels down where one of the human flesh-eaters is, he does not address the demon himself, but talks with another who is next him, and says, "My child, where did you get your black magic; did you get it that you might be all-powerful, you alone?" When he gets up he exclaims, "I have got you, you must not escape, you must go in there, in there, you must enter here" [into the mortar]. When he sees that his attendant has finished pounding the poison, he takes some water and pours it into the mortar, and stirs it, and removes the drugs and takes two gourd-cups, and fills them with the poison. The woman and the man, they are the first to drink. Then the doctor makes every one else do so. Two men drink, he draws again, and gives two women. And so on until all have partaken.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

766 wash the body, but only the face. The water they use they do not draw from the well where people drink, but take water from a running stream. The body is not anointed with oil. Then they take the spleen of an ox and deck his head till it all glitters, and then take the skin of an ox, killed that very day, and bind him in it. But do not wrap it round his head, but only as far as the neck, and take the fat from the ox's belly and throw it over him. Then he is set on a stone and the cup filled with beer.

II. The body remains in the hut four days, and bands of warriors sound their shields without ceasing. When the body begins to stink, oil is brought and poured in a dish and set fire to. On the fifth day they lift the body, the child whom the dead chief had named as his successor leads, and all the relations follow, and the wives of the dead chief. The warriors come in companies, village by village. Very old men bear the corpse. It is carried upright. When they come with it to the water, if it be running fully they do not dam it up, should it be low they dam it across with stones and mud, and down stream becomes quite dry. Then they begin to lay firewood on some rock in the stream, and bring the corpse and put it on the pile and take more wood and prop it up on the sides. When they have finished piling up the wood an old white-haired man makes fire, and when the hot ashes fall blows it into flame and sets fire to the pyre, and the flames go roaring up. They place the child (and heir) where the smoke is blowing to. He stands on one leg, his shield is in his hand. When the fire bursts out in sparks the men clash their shields and chant their war songs—

766 III. "This thing (that has befallen),
Have you heard these things, wife of an old man?"

8:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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"Wage war on the *Afo*,
Hayo, hayo, ho,
They have left him;
They have left him in their midst."

"*Humbe*, the mighty medicine man, has gone with them,
He has swallowed a magic horn, has *Humbe*."

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The shield of the chief, which he was wont to carry (*kuguire*), they burn on a fire at one side, and all his household belongings. When the fire has burned out, and the corpse also is consumed and turned to ashes, water is splashed over (the spot). Should the stream have been dammed they pull down the barrier, and all the ashes go down the *Mawi* (a river). When they see all is finished a sheep is killed, they take a wooden spoon and catch the blood and place it on the rock. Then they skin the sheep, cut it open, take the stomach, turn out the contents on the rock, and smear it over. The elders only eat the meat. When they have done this they go off to the village and kill many oxen, the people still keeping up the rolling sound with their shields. All the ornamental tuft of grass from the hut roofs belonging to the chief is removed. [231]

IV. Next morning all the headmen shave their heads, and then the people from the different villages. The widows put on the red head-bands. Then they allow three days to pass, and on the fourth every one assembles and the new chief stands at the village court on one leg. One old man steps out and says, "Do you hear, your new chief is so and so" (naming him by his clan-animal name). Then every one shouts, "Hail," and the thunder of their shields is heard, and all around is a mass of waving plumes (*Turaco leriwiri*). Then the elders

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6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

thrown away the day she comes out of the *tsimba* hut.) 881

II. On the seventh day, before dawn, one of the old women rises and makes a shrill noise with her tongue, then old matrons only collect and go with the girl to the stream. Should the maiden formerly have been of an insolent nature, she is tied up in a bundle of grass and thrown into the water. The old women warm themselves over a fire on the bank. When the sun gets hot, she is taken out, and set on the bank, and they commence to dance and pull her about, and reprove her, saying, "You there, listen; I sent you to go and draw water for me, and you refused. You said, 'I am not a slave.' But could you have come to the water here to-day? She who has brought you here, is not she that very old creature?" Then she is given all sorts of advice. When they have finished they shave her head and pubes, and rub her with oil and adorn her with beads. Then the old woman who is head of the ceremony takes her up on her back, and as they go they sing— [302]

"Wrinkles, mother, wrinkles,
I was at my own home, and never a wrinkle, [539]
I came among the Angoni,
I saw wrinkles, [536]
Wrinkles, O!
Things like this all fall on me.
Maiden cluck like an old sitting hen,
How can I cluck, I am only a young bird?
Cluck."

When they come with her to her mother's house, they sing—

"Tumbling about the things in her mother's hut,
In the hut that is no longer hers."

6:Ratray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

must perish indeed. Give your children the rains, there is the beer we have given you." Then the people begin to clap their hands and sound the *nkulungwoni*; they sing, swaying their bodies backwards and forwards, and keep saying, "Pardon, pardon." When they have finished propitiating, they take the beer that remains and dip a cup in and give every one to drink, just a little, no one is short, and even the children are made to sip it. When they have finished they take branches of trees and commence to dance and sing—

"This little cloud, and this,
This little cloud, and this,
Let the rains come with this little cloud.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Krôle.
Give us water,
Our hearts are dry,
Krôle."

When they come to the village they find an old woman has drawn water in readiness, and put it at the doorway, and the people begin to dip in their branches and wave them aloft, scattering the drops, and then they see the rain come in heavy storm-clouds.

6:Rattray E,G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

turns it out. They also trap them with a falling stone trap, and a spring trap, and others they dig for and smoke out. Mice dig out a hole, and a little farther on make a little chamber, where their nest is; farther on still is their escape exit, with just a thin layer of earth between them and the surface, so that when any one starts digging they can just burst out there. Other mice make a nest in the grass. The *Siswiri* mouse people do not eat; it cannot jump a path; if it tries to, it dies.

XII

THE WITCH-FINDER

I. When a person has died, the chief mourner goes off to seek the witch-finder. When he finds him he says, "At my home something awful has happened, and I am saying that perhaps you can follow up the thing that has killed the person." The witch-finder comes very late in the evening. When he comes, the chief mourner gives him children to lead him to the grave. When they come to the grave there, he asks them, saying, "Which way did they come with the body?" And they say they came there. And he puts medicine where they came, and asks again, saying, "Well, and his head, which direction did they lay it?" And they tell him, "His head was in this direction." He again with medicine guards the place. Then the witch-finder makes fire, and kindles it into flame, and pours medicine on it; and he does so lest people see the fire. And then they see the human flesh-eaters

6:Ratray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

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•539 are coming; they stand a long way off, and then they call the dead man by his old name, the one he was born with, saying, "Come forth so and so." And the dead man begins to come out of the grave. Then the witch-finder says, "You must not come forth; I am your redeemer." And he returns to the bottom of his grave again. Those flesh-eaters call him again, and he would come forth, but the witch-finder again says the same. Then the human flesh-eaters say, "Who is it that is making our meat to refuse [to step forth]?" And they throw two little pieces of wood, and they turn into lions; they keep coming and clawing (the ground) and roaring, and then the witch-finder sees they are come quite close, and he takes his medicine and scatters it, and these wild beasts turn into little bits of wood, and he takes the bits of wood and puts them in his horn. They send all the wild beasts, but they effect nothing. Then they say, "Whoever can it be who is more powerful than we? Come, come, come, let us see him." Then they come, as it were there, and stand in line, and send one; say they, "Go you and dance and wriggle." And he, when he would wriggle and dance, was not able, and he comes and says, "No, no, no, I cannot dance." (The witch-finder and his fire are glimmering.) "Let another go and try, if it be you think I am lying." And the other, when he would dance, is made to fall just the same. Then the witch-finder says, "I am tired of them." And he takes his (medicine) tail and waves it, and they are dead, and he commences to identify them, saying, "That is so and so, and that so and so." And then he asks, "Well, what shall we do with them—shall we kill them, shall we leave them?" Then perhaps he whose case it is (*mwini wake*) says, "Kill them." The witch-doctor takes sharpened sticks and drives them in

6:Ratzzay E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

between their legs, and begins one by one, and tells him, "You, you will let three days elapse, the fourth you will die;" and tells another, "You will let four days pass, and on the fifth you die." All of them he speaks to thus. Then he takes some medicine and scatters it, and they rise and begin to run off, and the witch-finder also runs away. At the village, when they have slept three days, they hear so and so is dead, and when four days have gone they hear so and so is dead.

XIII

AN ANGONI PRAYER FOR RAIN

1. When rain does not come, they go to the man with the lots to consult them. He of the lots says, "It is the great spirit; it is she who is keeping the rain from coming." Then all the elders assemble. In the morning at dawn, an ox is taken from the kraal, and the chief stands up and says, "This ox I have given you, our ancestor, seeing that you are keeping the rain from us; give us, your children, rain; look, all men are afflicted because of you." And the elders utter a response, saying, "Hail, chief, spare us, help us, thy people." And when they are answering (thus) the ox makes water, and then people know the spirit has heard. Should it not make water, they say the spirit refused (to do as asked), and leave the ox, and go again to consult the lots. And they kill the ox, and cut of its tail, and put it in a basket, and take also the liver, and put in the basket, and these they go off to the Kaka

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

their relations may dig them out, and place them in some other country.) And they throw them to the back of the cave, and take the corpse and lay it on top of them. Then they begin to fill in, the ones in the cave are groaning: "Alas, alas!" When they have finished filling in, they go to the water to bathe. When they return to the village they dance.

XV

THE CHIEF OF THE KUKA AND THE SON-IN-LAW

I. The chief of the *Kuka* hut and his son-in-law once hoed a garden. When the maize grew up, the father-in-law told his son-in-law to build a watch-tower. Then the father-in-law went off and forged some arrow-heads, and gave them to his son-in-law, saying, "There are some arrows, you must keep a look-out with them in the garden here." And the son-in-law received the arrows, and remained at the watch-tower there. One day the wind came and flattened down all the maize, and his father-in-law came to walk on a round of inspection in the garden, and then he saw that the wind had laid the maize, and he clapped his hands and said, "Oh, to-day I see wonders, those arrow-heads I just forged for him to keep by him [and look at]." And then he went up to the watch-tower, where his son-in-law was, and asked him, saying, "Those arrow-heads I forged, I just forged that you might sleep with them on the watch-tower here?" And the son-

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 PRS Nguni PRS

606 in-law replied, "And how am I to wound the
●539 winds?"

II. When the father-in-law had gone off, the son-in-law took some maize and went off to set some falling-traps, and one of his traps caught a guinea-fowl, and he took it out, and went and gave it to his wife, saying, "There is a guinea-fowl, cook it; I am going away a long way; I shall be away four days, and for my share you must harden some of the gravy over the fire, the meat you can eat yourself." Then the woman went off and told her father, saying, "That fellow has killed a guinea-fowl, and he tells me I must brown the gravy before the fire for him, and the meat I am to eat, and where he has gone he will remain four days." And the father said, "And how can you brown gravy over a fire, my child?"

III. When the son-in-law returned, he told his wife, "Cook some porridge." And the woman did so, and went with it to her husband. But he looked into the dish and said, "Where is my gravy, that I told you to brown before the fire?" Then the woman went off to tell her father, saying, "He is
539 asking for the gravy." Then the father went off
607 to tell the villagers, "You must settle a case for
606 me." So the people assembled at the village court in crowds, and (one) said, "Chief of the *Kuka* hut, state your case that we may hear." Then the chief of the *Kuka* hut took up his case and began to speak, saying, "As for me, I bid you ask my son-in-law there, on my account, the things which he has in his heart." Then the people spoke, laying the charge before the son-in-law. And he replied, "Yes, what he says is true about me, but I was at the watch-tower, and I saw the chief of the *Kuka* hut, and he asks of me, saying, "You there, do you just sleep on the watch-tower here, and not keep a look-out over the garden? The arrows I went

6:Satray E,C-S (ca. 1900) 1907 PRS Hgoni PRS

and forged that you might just keep them by you, and not keep a look-out for what is eating up the maize in the garden." And as for me, I replied, saying, "And you, how do you wound the winds?" So I also went and caught some "meat," that they in their turn should brown some gravy for me, for, seeing they know how to wound the wind with an arrow, they could also brown gravy before a fire; and that is what the case against me is." And the elders said, "That is his complaint, is it? The chief of the *Kuku* hut was in the wrong."

XVI

THE TORTOISE AND THE ANTELOPE

1. A Tortoise and an Antelope once had an argument. The Antelope said, "Tortoise, are you able to run along with me?" And the Tortoise replied, "Yes, I am able." Then the Tortoise went off to tell his companions, and he said, "We have had a discussion with the Antelope (about running), and he says we must race together, and you, my friends, come along, you must give me your assistance." And the Tortoise began to place them in a long line, and they reached to the plain which they had agreed upon [as the scene of the race]. Then the Antelope said, "Tortoise, come on, let us begin to run." Then the Antelope set off as hard as he could; he runs and runs, and at length calls out, "Hallo, Tortoise!" And the Tortoise replied far in front, "Hallo! I passed long ago." And the Antelope set off again, and again called out, "Where

Bancroft E,G-S (ca. 1900) 1917 PRS Hgmi PRS

• 539 are you, Tortoise?" And the Tortoise replied, "As for me, I passed long ago." So the Antelope had just to give up.

XVII

THE TWO-HEADED PYTHON

1. Once upon a time there was a Python with two heads; he was very long, and sang a song, which said—

"*N'gingiringi* when walking,
He says '*N'gingiringi*,'
Walking he says, '*N'gingiringi*.'"

And from his back some one repeated just the same (song). And he made up a pipe of hemp and coughed *wopo! wopo! wopo!* and from behind him he heard *wopo! wopo! wopo!* And he asked, "Who is that trying to imitate me?" And he sent his attendants, telling them, "Go see (who it was), and when you have found him, kill him." And they went off, following their master's [body], and at length came to where it ended, and they say, "Must we kill him; if we do so, will not he (our master) die? Come, let us leave him." And they went to tell him, and said, "Well, his body and yours are one and the same, how shall we kill him?" But the Python was angry, saying, "Why did you spare him? I wish you to kill him." And then he lit his pipe again and coughed *wopo!* and said, "Go, you must not spare him again; to-day go and kill him."

6.Ramsay E.G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

So the attendants came to where the second head was, and cut its throat, and as they return he is decaying; when he would cough he cannot finish, and just goes, "*wopo! 'opo! 'po!*" with a weak voice, and decays, and decays, and dies. 539 ●

XVIII

THE STORY OF KACHIRAMBE

I. Some young girls once said, "Come, let us go and pluck leaves for a relish with our porridge." And when they were gathering them, one of the children saw the egg of a hyæna, and picked it up, and put it in her basket, and said to her companions, "You children, I have got all I want, I am going." And her companions said, "Whenever did you pull them, when you are off so soon?" And she replied, "As for me, I filled my basket some time ago." So her companions bade her go. When she has gone, they saw a hyæna; he has come up to them and asks, saying, "You children, who has taken my egg from there?" And they deny having done so, saying, "We do not know, but she who has gone off perhaps she has taken it." And the hyæna went off. He comes to where she lives, and says, "Who has taken my egg?" And the mother of the girl replies, "But the child, she has come in with an egg, it is on the fire," and the hyæna said, "Well, what am I to do?" And the woman replied, "Wait, when I have a child you shall eat him." And the hyæna said, "Yes, [that is a good arrangement]."

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 II. Another day, when the mother went to the water, the hyæna asked her if she had had the child, and the woman replied, "No, not yet." And every day the hyæna is asking the same thing, and then one day he said, "If you do not quickly have that child you are the one I shall eat." And then the woman saw a boil on her shin bone, it is all swollen and soft. And it burst, and there came forth a child. He has a bow, and a quiver full of arrows, and a little gourd of medicine, and a knife and dogs, and he said, "I have come forth, I, Kachirambe, the child born on a shin bone." Then the mother of this Kachirambe was again asked by the hyæna, when she went to the stream, if she had had the child, and she replied, "Yes, and the child is very clever, you cannot catch him, but I myself shall deceive him for you; you I tie up in a bundle of grass and then I shall go and tell Kachirambe, 'Go and lift the bundle of grass which is on the path there.'" Then she tied up the hyæna in a grass bundle, and went off to the village and told her child, "Go and lift the bundle of grass that is on the path." Then Kachirambe went, and stood a long way off, and said, "You bundle, get up that I may lift you easily." And the bundle got up by itself, and Kachirambe said, "What bundle is it that gets up alone? As for me, I have not seen such a one, and I do not intend to lift it." And off he went to the village.

III. And the hyæna came along, and told the woman that her child was a clever one indeed. And she told him that to-day she would cheat him over a falling stone trap for killing rats. And she said to Kachirambe, "Go, set a falling trap, see the rats are finishing the baskets." Then Kachirambe got a large flat stone, and a forked stick, and the stick to lay across it, and bark string, and got the

Ratray E,G-8 (ca. 1900) 1907 PRS Ngoni PRS

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little bit of stick which sets the trap, and ties it on, and takes the bait and puts it in the trap, and has finished. In the evening the hyæna comes to the trap, and causes it to fall, and Kachirambe's mother called out, "Kachirambe, the trap has fallen." Then Kachirambe said, "You trap fall again, that I may know a rat has been caught." And the hyæna is at the trap, heave ho, bang! And Kachirambe said, "What trap is it that falls twice? I have not yet seen one of that kind."

IV. Then Kachirambe's mother again told the hyæna, saying, "Go and wait at the bean-tree, and I shall go and tell my child to go and pull beans." So Kachirambe went, and got his basket, and transformed himself into a fly, and the hyæna just keeps looking out for him, saying, "I wonder (upalo) if he will come." He sees not a sign, and then Kachirambe got all he wanted, and came to the village, and his mother was again astonished, saying, "Where did he get the beans when there is only one tree of them?" Then the mother said, "To-day I shall deceive him telling him to go and bring firewood, and you (hyæna) will corner him there." And she said to Kachirambe, "Go and get wood in the bush." But that child had a dream, that to-day he would go to his death, and he took his bow, and quiver, and little medicine gourd, and his great big knife, and went off, and climbed into a tree, and began to cut; and then he saw the hyæna has come, and says, "You have died to-day, you do not escape. I shall eat you, come down quickly from up there." And Kachirambe cut off (a piece of) wood and said, "I am coming down, you gape." And the hyæna gaped, and said, "Come down." And Kachirambe answered, "Yes, I am coming." And he threw the lump of wood and it entered the mouth of the

6:Ramsay E, G-6 (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngani FRS

539 hyæna, and it died; and his dogs, when they would have bitten it, died also. And Kashiyambo came down, and took his medicine, and scattered it over his dogs, and they got up. When he went to the village he shot an arrow, saying, "What did I say to you when you must needs send wild beasts against me to eat me?" And his mother begged pardon (of him), saying, "Pardon, my child, my apologies suffice without the case being brought up for trial." [Lit. the case is finished at the mouth.]

XIX

THE RABBIT AND THE LION

I. A Rabbit once dug a game-pit that he might kill game, and carefully covered it over, and then he took his axe and stuck it up on a tree, and began to cry, saying, "Mother, mother!" Then a Bush-buck came along and asked why he was crying, and the Rabbit said, "There came a Reed-buck and he has put my axe up there out of my reach." And the Bush-buck said, "There, and you have given up trying to get it down by yourself, but I shall bring it down for you." But when he made to bring it down, he fell into the game-pit, and the Rabbit jumped and got his axe, and cut at the Bush-buck, and again stuck his axe up, and covered over the game pit anew, and again began to cry. And a Buffalo came along. "Why are you crying, child?" And the Rabbit said, "A Sable-antelope came, and he has put my axe up above out of my reach. And the Buffalo said, "There, wait, I shall

G.Barnsley E.C.-6 (ca. 1900) 1907 PRS Digest PRS

get it down for you." And when he was about to do so, he went down the game-pit, and the Rabbit jumped up again, got his axe, and killed the Buffalo with it. And a Lion comes by. "Why do you weep, Rabbit?" And he replied, "There came past an Elephant, and he has placed my axe up aloft out of my reach." And the Lion said, "Wait a bit, I shall get it down for you." And when he would do so, he fell into the game-pit, but (this time) the Rabbit also fell in there, and the Lion seized him, and said, "How comes it you deceived me so that I fall? As for me, now I kill you." And the Rabbit said, "Pardon, great chief, I am yours; if it be you have children, I shall look after them for you." And the Lion answered, "My children are two, and them you shall nurse."

II. And then they went to the Lion's village, and he was told, "You there, the children you have to nurse, there they are." The Lion went to the forest to hunt game, and on his return called the Rabbit to take the game (he had killed) to his cubs, saying, "You Rabbit, go and eat the bones, the children you must go and give the flesh to, because their teeth are not yet strong." But the Rabbit went off, and said, "You cubs, there is a bone for you, you will eat that you may harden your teeth; as for me I shall eat the flesh." Next morning the Rabbit said to the cubs, "Come, let us go to the stream to play." And when they came to the water, he said, "Come, let us wrestle to see who is the strongest." And a cub knocked down the Rabbit, and he said, "You must not kill me; if you kill me, who will show you the way to the village?" So he was spared, but the Rabbit in his turn overcame the cub, and twisted his neck, and then took the other one and went off with it to the hut. Then the father called him,

G.Ramsay E, G-S (ca. 1909) 1907 FRS Signal FRS

• 539 and said, "There is some meat, go and give it to the children, and I also come there to see my children." Then the Rabbit held up a cub, and showed it him, saying, "Look, there you have one." He lifts it up again, and says, "There is another." But he held up the one (both times). Another day the Rabbit said, "Come, let us battle again." And they began again to play about, and the cub knocked the Rabbit down, and said, "You supposed back there you had killed my brother for me." And the Rabbit said, "If you kill me, whom do you go with to the village?" So the cub spared him, and the Rabbit then got on top and killed him. Then he said, "How now, seeing I have killed them all, can I go and deceive them at the village? But I shall just climb into a thorn tree, and get all scratched." So he climbed up, and threw himself down, crashing through the branches, and scratched all his body, and ran to inform the Lion, saying, "Sir, I have not seen what is good to-day; the cubs, they have killed them to-day. Look, I barely managed to escape, they would have killed me also." And the Lion said, "Have you recognized them?" And the Rabbit replied, "I knew some of them, I go (now) to identify them."

III. So he went off, and came to the village of the Baboons, and finds the villagers playing at throwing tops at maize cobs, and saying as they threw, "Hands!" Then the Rabbit said, "Friends, let us throw together, all of us, and when I throw, when I say, "Who ate the Lion's cub?" you must say, "It was I, it was I"; that is the proper thing to say, and as for us, we always say so." When leaving, the Rabbit said, "You fellows, I come back to-morrow and we shall throw again." Then the Rabbit went back to the Lion, and said, "They who killed the children I have cornered to-day."

Ramsay E.G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

And the Lion said, "Come, let us all go that I may go and see." But the Rabbit said, "I must tie you up in a bundle." And he tied him up, and took some fruit and stuck them here and there in the bundle, that the Baboons might rejoice, saying, "Our friend has come with something to eat to-day." So they came to the Baboon's village, and the Rabbit said, "I have come, get out the logs that we may throw them." And he began to throw, saying, "Who ate the Lion's cub, and here and here he has not yet come back?" And the Baboons replied, "It was I, it was I." And the Rabbit also said, "Listen, my bundle, yourself." And the bundle began to unfasten, and the Lion burst out, and seized all the Baboons.

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XX

THE RABBIT AND THE ELEPHANT

1. Without there was a drought, and the ground became hard, without any water, and all the animals were in distress, and the Elephant said, "You all, we shall die, come let us scrape out a hole, to see if the water will come." Then all the animals collected, and went to an open plain, and the Elephant said, "I must begin to stamp." (And as he stamped) he said, "Let me stamp there, there is water, let me stamp there, there is water." And they just see clouds of dust. Then the Rhino. said, "Wait, I am going to try to stamp." And he began, "Let me tramp there, and there is water." But he just gave up too. All the animals

S.Ratray E, G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Nguni FRS

539 failed, and then the Rabbit said, "Wait a bit, let me tramp." Then the great ones (of the forest) rebuked him, saying, "What you, you would stamp (with) your tiny little feet? Look at my foot, it is like the bottom of a grain mortar." And the Rabbit replied, "I can only try, if it be too much for me, let me fail, having made the attempt." And he began to tramp—

"I must tramp there, (and) there is water,
I must tramp there, (and) there is water."

And they saw the damp soil was showing up. And the Elephant came and said, "Get out, I must stamp." And he stamped and tramped, and again they just saw dust rolling up, and he said, "Come here, Rabbit, you shall try again." And then they saw a pool, stretching far away, and all the animals drank. And the elephant issued a proclamation, and said, "Let not one other Rabbit be seen drinking water here, except that Rabbit who got down to the water, he shall drink." Then the Rabbits said, "As for us, we have not yet seen the like, the water which our kinsman pierced through to, it, they must say, the Rabbits must not drink." Then the Elephant said, "I shall be watchman and shall see who comes to drink water here." And then the Rabbits talked together for a little, and said, "Come, children, let us take our battle-axes, and be off and dig for honey."

II. (Some time after) a Rabbit came along (to the pool) and hailed, and the Elephant said, "And who are you?" And the Rabbit said, "It is I, and I have got something sweet to suck, for giving the great ones (of the forest) to sip when once they have been bound." And the Elephant said, "Let me see, and have tasted it first." And the Rabbit gave him a little gourd-cup (with some honey in it),

Schaumay Z,G-S (ca. 1950) 1907 FRS Ngoni FRS

saying, "There." And the Elephant put in his trunk, and licked it, and said, "Yes, indeed it is good, tie me up." Then the Rabbit took his string and bound him, and went and had a drink, and cleared off, and the Elephant said, "Rabbit, you are going off without giving me (the honey)." But the Rabbit just went off, taking no notice. Then the Elephant called out, "Children, come and unbind me." And his companions came, and said, "Who has tied you?" And the Elephant replied, "The Rabbit came along with something sweet for sucking, and he said it was for giving the great one of the forest to suck, but they must first be bound, and I said, 'Well, bind me,' and he bound me, and drank his fill of water, and ran off." Then the Tortoise spoke, saying, "I must wait here to-day." And the Elephant said, "Child Tortoise, you who shuffle along, is it you who would catch the Rabbit?" And the Tortoise replied, "Never mind, stick bees' wax on me, I shall catch him on this very spot." Then his companions rubbed wax over him, and set him by the water, and he just remained with his back sticking up above the water, plain to be seen. And then the Rabbit came along and said, "Hallo, there!" He sees (lit. has seen) everything is quiet. So he came to the water, that he might look and look, but found there was no one. Then he said, "But I must drink from the stone there." And he comes, and jumps on the back of the Tortoise, and drinks and drinks, and when he would say, "Now I must be off," he found he was stuck fast. And then the Tortoise began to shout out, "I have got him, I have got him, come all of you." Then all the animals came and pulled out the Tortoise along with the Rabbit, and one seized the Tortoise, and another the Rabbit, and pulled them apart, and

6:Santay E, G-5 (ca. 1905) 1907 FRS Ngumi FRS

539 the Rabbit said, "You all, if you are going to kill me, and you go and seize me by the head, I shall live, if you seize me by the leg I shall live, but if you catch hold of my tail, that is my death."

III. So they caught hold of his tail, and when they would dash him down his tail stripped off. So the Rabbit ran off home and told his companions, saying, "There has come a tail-stripper (into the country); look at mine there, I have long ago pulled it off, he declares. Should he see a person who has not his tail stripped off, that one he seizes, he says." So it came to pass, at their village there, the Rabbits stripped off each other's tails, all of them. Then the Elephant came—he is following the spoor of the Rabbit on the damp soil, and he says, "I have you to-day, who was that one who came to drink water?" Then the Rabbit said, "How do we know? we are not proper rabbits; look, we all are without a tail. Should you see one with a tail, he is not of our village." So the Elephant just gave up the quest, and went home. And the story ends there.

XXI

THE COCK AND THE SWALLOW

I. A Cock and a Swallow once struck up a friendship, and the Cock called the Swallow, and said, "You must come along to my home, and we shall chat." And the Cock told his wife, that when the Swallow came, she was to say to him, "Your friend, is not that he there? He says he has cut off his head, as he has had a great shock." Then the

Gaffney E.C-5 (ca. 1960) 1957 FRS Ngumi FRS

Swallow came and asked for his friend. (The Cock had taken his head and put it under his wing, so that his friend must come and say he had cut it off with a knife.) Then the Cock's wife said, "Is not that he there? He says he has cut off his head, as he has had a great shock." And the Swallow sat and sat, and waited and waited, and at last went off home without seeing him. And the Swallow in his turn went to his hut, and told his wife, "To-day I am going to call my friend the Cock, and when he came there, you will say to him, that his friend had cut off his head, as he had received a great shock over something." And the Cock came, and asked the Swallow's wife where his friend was, and she said, "Is not that he, there? He says he has cut off his head, as he had a shock over something he had seen." And however the Cock may look and look he does not see the slightest movement, because the Swallow had taken a knife and cut off his head. Then the Cock went off home and remained there three days, and came to the Swallow's hut, and said, "How is our friend now? We do not see him coming to our home to talk over things." And the Swallow's wife replied, "I do not know, he is still lying there as before." And that is how the Swallow went away (from this earth).

II. But a kinsman of the Swallow's also struck up a friendship with the Cock, saying, "Let me see [what I can do to get even with him]." And he said to the Cock, "You and I indeed love each other, we shall never part." Then the Swallow told his wife that to-day she was to cook pumpkins as he was going to summon his friend the Cock, and when he came and should ask where his friend was, she was to say, "Your friend is in there" (in the pot). Then the Cock arrived and asked

Library E, G-S (ca. 1900) 1967 PRS Digest PRS

539 where his friend was, and the woman said, "Your friend is in here." The Cock may look, he finds the pot is boiling with the fire, and he was astonished, saying, "My friend must come out of the pot there?" Then the woman uncovered the pot, and the Swallow darted forth; he enters the middle of the smoke, just as if he is coming out of the pot, and sat down and said, "Ah, we were in there, and we heard you talking. Wife, dish out the pumpkin, we shall eat with the visitor." And the woman served out the pumpkin, and gave it them, and the Swallow began to eat with his friend. But the Cock went home, and told his wife that to-morrow she must cook pumpkins as he was going to eat his friend, and him she was to put in the pot, and when the Swallow came she was to say that her lord was in the pot. And the woman asked if he should not be cooked, and he replied, "No, for my friend acted thus, his wife cooked him, and I in my turn tell you you have got to cook me, and when the Swallow comes you must uncover me (in the pot) and I, I shall come forth with the smoke." And so the woman took some pumpkins, and sliced them up in a pot, and put it on the fire, and poured in water, and got fire-wood and broke it up at the fire, and put her husband in the pot and covered it over. And then her pot began to boil, but the Cock began to flap about in the pot, and at last died in it, and the woman just kept piling on the wood. Then his friend the Swallow came and said, "Where is my friend?" And the woman said, "He is in the pot there." And when she uncovered the pot, she saw the feathers all loose, and she said, "Is this life?" And she began to dish out, and saw her husband did not rise, he is all limp. And the Swallow said, "Have you cooked our friend?" And the Cock's wife said,

6Satmay E,G-6 (ra. 1900) 1907 FEE Mgmt FEE

" He would insist on telling me, saying ' Cook.' I asked him if he should not be burned, and he said ' No, my friend did this, I shall not burn.' " And the Swallow said, " You have acted badly." But when he went off to his own home he told the story to his companions, saying, " I made a fool of the Cock, and his wife cooked him. He used to say he had fooled us, we on our part have fooled him and he has died, even as our kinsman died long ago."

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XXII

THE TORTOISE AND THE BABOON

I. A Tortoise and a Baboon made a covenant of friendship, and the Baboon told the Tortoise, " you must come to my home and drink beer." So when the beer was ready, the Tortoise set out (to visit) the Baboons, and he found they had already climbed into a tree, and taken their beer with them. And the Tortoise they addressed, saying, " Climb up here, for we do not drink beer on the ground." And the Tortoise when he would climb, slips, and at length gives up. And the Baboons said, " See, there is the beer, it is your own fault if you leave it." Then the Tortoise went off home and cooked beer of his own and summoned the Baboons; then he set fire to grass, and set his beer down in the centre of the burned patch, and then thoroughly washed the cup (for drinking the beer with). And the Baboons, when they came, trampled all over the burned place, and then the Tortoise told them, " Look here, this cup belongs to some one else,

G.Ramsay E,G-6 (ca. 1900) 1907 PRS Ngoni 783

• 539 and he says you must not catch hold of it with dirty hands, first of all go and wash your hands. And the Baboons went off to wash; coming back they came and tread again on the burned place, and finally the Tortoise says, "It is your own fault if you leave the bear."

XXIII

THE TORTOISE AND THE LEMUR

I. A Tortoise once married at a certain village, and a Lemur also asked for a wife at the very same place, and the reason they "acted the son-in-law" was that they were poor; had they had wealth they would have got a wife by purchase. Then their mother-in-law divided out a garden for them, saying, "The Tortoise will hoe and go in that direction, the Lemur will hoe and go in that." So they commenced to hoe in their gardens, and the Tortoise sang—

"Shuffling along I go, they at the village will say he is hoeing." (*Repeat.*)

And the Lemur sang—

"Chop! I have cut, Lemur you just hate me."

And people saw, in the direction of the Lemur, a clear open space, but in that of the Tortoise the bush was thick. Then one day, their mother-in-law said she wished to go and see in the gardens where her sons-in-law were hoeing. When she

Callaway E.G-S (ca. 1868) 1957 FRS Digest FRS

came there, she saw where the Lemur was, was 531
lead, and where the Tortoise was, there was not
a day's hoeing done, and she said, "It seems I
have chosen a man who cannot hoe; now the Lemur
he is a man, he tries to hoe." And she told the
Tortoise to go and cut down a tree which was in
the middle of the garden, and told him, if he did
not fell it, he should clear out from there. Then
the Tortoise pondered, saying, "How shall I go
and cut down the tree, as if I could climb up aloft;
but I must make friends with some person, and
perhaps he may go and cut it down for me."

II. And then the Tortoise saw a Wild-cat, and
said, "Cat, you are my friend, you must go and
cut down for me the tree that is in my mother-in-
law's garden." And the Wild-cat got up very early
in the morning, when the cold morning wind was
blowing, and came to the tree, and cut and cut.
When it was quite light outside, the Tortoise took
his axe, saying, "I must go and cut down my tree."
So he went off, he crawls along, his axe he throws
in front of him, and shuffles up to it. When he
got to the tree, he found that the Wild-cat had cut
it down, and lopped off all the branches, and then
the Wild-cat went off, and the Tortoise remained;
he listlessly cuts. When he sees his mother-in-law
(coming) he strives with all his might. The mother-
in-law was surprised, saying, "What, the Tortoise
has cut down that tree in this manner, now he is
my son-in-law, he does not again leave me." And
again at the Wild-cat's home there was a mourning.
And the Wild-cat went to call the Tortoise, and
told him, saying, "At my home they are electing
a new chief, and you, my friend, in your turn, will
go and ransom me to-day, (for) when the other
children come and speak their names (at the grave)
you will remain silent; when you hear me saying,

6 Surrey E, G-S (ex. 1964) 1967 FSS Signed FSS

539 "I, the Wild-cat, have come, that I may guide the people," you shall answer, and the chieftainship will be mine." And the Tortoise went off in the very middle of the night, and burrowed at the grave, and went in. Next morning at dawn a great crowd assembled, and one child came out and said, "I, so and so, have come and I say I must rule the people." And at the grave yonder they saw not a sign. Then there came forth another child and said, "I, so and so, have come that I may rule your village." At the grave there is not a sound. And then the Wild-cat got up and said, "I, the Wild-cat, am come, and I say I must rule your people." Thereupon all the people heard at the grave there speaking, saying, "Yes, I am wishing for you, my child, the Wild-cat, that you should rule my people well, in my stead." Then every one rejoiced, and they lifted up the Wild-cat and put him on their shoulders, and that evening the Tortoise came out (of the grave) to go home.

III. Then at the Wild-cat's they made beer, and went and called the Tortoise, and the Tortoise told the children of the village, saying, "Come, my friend has summoned me, we must go and drink beer." Then the children of the village taunted him, saying, "You, where will you see a friend?" And the Tortoise said, "Come, you must go and see my friend, he is greater than any of you." So the Tortoise went off with the children from the village, and came to the village of the Wild-cat, and the Wild-cat got a mat in readiness and spread it down for him. Then he got out beer, and set it down before the Tortoise, saying, "There is food." And the Tortoise in his turn passed it to the children from his village, and they drank and drank the beer, and then he bade his friend farewell. And when he has come to his village these children (who had

Gurney E.G-S (ca. 1900) 1907 FRS Ipost FRS

always laughed at him) spread a good report, saying, "The Tortoise is a chief; you must not always be annoying and contradicting him, for we to-day have seen with our own eyes, the friend of the Tortoise is a very great chief."

XXIV

THE BLIND MAN AND THE HUNCHBACK

1. Long ago a chief built his village, and to the village there used to come lions to seize people. And the chief said, "What are we to do with these lions?" And his people said, "Speak with them." Then the chief asked them, saying, "How is it you are always seizing people?" And the lions said, "We are saying you must give us your two daughters whom you love, and when you give us the children we shall not come back to catch people." Then the chief took his two children, and went and made a rough grass hut for them at the hill where the lions came forth from. And from another country there set out two men, one blind and the other hunchbacked, and they were on their way to the chief's village. And Hunchback saw a tortoise on the path, and he told his comrade, "There is a tortoise here." And Blind-eyes said, "Pick it up." And Hunchback refused. Then Blind-eyes said, "Pick it up for me." And he picked it up for him, and put it in his wallet. And they walked and walked, and came to another place, and found that a porcupine had died there. And Hunchback said, "There is a porcupine here." And his companion

Kenney E,G-4 (ca. 1960) 1307 FRS Ngoni FRS

●539 said, "Pick up one of his spines." But he refused, and Blind-eyes said, "Well, pick it up for me." And he did so, and put it in his bag, and they went elsewhere, and found there had died an elephant there, and the man who had wounded the elephant, he also was dead, and his gun was there, and Hunchback again said, "There has died an elephant here, and the man and his gun are on the same spot." And his companion said, "Pick up the gun and one tusk." And he refused, and Blind-eyes said, "Pick them up for me."

II. When they saw the sun was setting, Hunchback climbed a hill, and he saw on the other side there was smoke rising, and they went there and found two maidens in a grass hut, and they said, "Darkness has overtaken us, and we wish somewhere to sleep." But the girls refused, saying, "You must not sleep here; as for us, our father built us the hut, that when the lions come they may come and eat us." But they refused (to be warned), and said, "We sleep here." When they would have talked on, they find the lions have come, they are roaring, and then one asks, "Who is it talking in the hut? Let us eat them up together." Then Blind-eyes said, "You are not able to eat us; and as for us, we only came here to find sleeping-room." And the lion said, "I shall throw one of my lice at you, and you will be frightened (enough then)." Thereupon they all fainted with the exception of Blind-eyes; and then the lion threw a louse, and Blind-eyes felt about with his hand for it, and picked it up, and said, "That tiny little thing! See, I go and cast it on the fire." And when he did so, it gave a crack, and he said, "Now, in my turn, I am going to throw you my louse." And he got out the tortoise and threw it; and the lion picks it up, looks at it, and says (aside), "Ah yes, he has

Bellamy F.G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 PRS Ngoni PRS

huge lion." But he says, "No, I am not afraid; 537 ●
now I am going to throw a hair of mine for you 567
(to see). And he pulled out one hair, saying, "There it is, I have thrown it for you (to see)." And Blind-eyes feels about for it, and says, "That is what I am to fear! look at mine." And he takes the porcupine quill, and throws it at the lion, and the lion picks it up, looks at it, and says, "Yes, indeed" (aside). But he says, "No; even though you can do such things I am not going to spare you." And he takes a tooth and throws it, and Blind-eyes feels about for it, picks it up, and says, "I am to fear this, am I? Wait till I throw you mine."

III. Then he cast the tusk of the elephant at him, and the lion gave a jump, saying, "Ha! yes, indeed, the fellow has a fearsome tooth" (aside). But he said, "Now I am going to let you hear my voice." And he began to roar, and Blind-eyes said, "The other—let it sound its voice too, that I may hear you." Then he said, "I have heard, and now come close that you may hear my voice." Then the lions came up close, and Blind-eyes said, "Where are you?" And they said, "We are here." And he said, "Lay your heads together." Then he took his gun and pointed it in their direction, and said, "Now listen, I am going to talk my words." And he fired the gun, and killed the lot. Said he, "Have you heard my words?" He finds all is silence. Then he roused his companions who had fainted, saying, "Get up, I have killed those wild beasts." And they contradict him, saying, "You are deceiving us." And Blind-eyes said, "You people, do get up; you must open the door for me, and I can go and look myself." And they did so, and he goes and feels, and says, "This is the male, this the female. Come outside, that you may see for yourselves."

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 IV. Next morning, they went off; one of the maidens carried Blind-eyes, and the other Hunchback, on their backs. When they came to the village their father saw them, and said, "What, you have come back again, though I said you were to remain there; now I shall kill you all." And the children told him that (the men) had killed those wild beasts, and the father asked if that was indeed true, and they said, "May I be struck dead if it is not." And the father sent men to see. And they came and found them, and cut off their tails, and went and told the chief, saying, "There are the tails; it is quite true they killed them." Then the chief held a consultation with his people, saying, "Well, those people who killed the wild beasts, what are we to do about them?" And they said, "You must just give them these maidens in marriage." So they gave Blind-eyes his, and Hunchback his, and took six shells, saying, "One, three, the other, three, and you must go and build your village there." And as they went along the road, Hunchback said, "They have given us five shells, and they say, two are yours, and three are mine." And Blind-eyes said, "Oh, you are cheating me; did not the chief say he had given us six?—mine three, and yours three; how comes it you deceive me, insomuch as when I said, 'Pick up this,' you refused?" Then Hunchback stood up and hit him on the eyes, and straightway Blind-eyes found his eyes were opened; and he took his knobkerry and hit his companion, and Hunchback found his back had straightened. And thereupon they grasped hands in token of friendship.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXV

SOME RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

I. "Come, let us give riddles to-day," some one says, and then every one collects, and the hut is packed. One begins to say, "Such and such a thing, what is it?" And should his companions give up, then (the one who gave the riddle) says, "Then kill me so and so's cattle." And they do so (in pretence), saying, "Go and eat what's his name's." And he has them stabbed, the meat is all over the place, and eats and eats, and says, "The answer is so and so." 517

Some Riddles

Q. Something without a spoor; what is that? 539 ●
A. An arrow.

Q. Something that cannot be bound.
A. The winds. (Perhaps water, or smoke.)

Q. Something with a very keen scent; for even if you hide away some little thing you have, it goes and finds it out. What is that?
A. A fly.

Q. Something which warms itself with its back to the fire.
A. The shelf above the fire, in a hut.

Q. A war which baffles all of you; there is one little thing, spoiling for a fight, that goes and tackles it. What is that?
A. The porridge stick.

Q. A person shoots his arrow up in the air, and when it returns, it does so without its shaft.
A. Winged white ant. (Because when it flies off it has wings, but falls without its wings.)

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●539 *Q.* A little thing, yet that cannot be lifted.
A. A shadow.

Q. A tree which grows out of a companion tree.
A. The *ulimbo* tree.

Q. Up down, up down. What is that?
A. A pestle (for pounding grain).

Q. The house has been burned, and there remains only the cross-beam.
A. A path. (Because when the bush is burned the road-way is there stretching away.)

Q. I built a hut with only one post to prop up the roof. What is that?
A. A mushroom.

Q. Two people support a huge thing. What is that?
A. The two pair of supports of a grain store.

Q. The stone trap has fallen over and over again to-day alone. What is that?
A. The eyelid.

Q. Something which no number of people can lift, yet there is one person who can do so.
A. Water.

Q. Something which comes from far away, and finds us here.
A. The rain.

Q. A man who hoes many gardens in one day without being tired.
A. A barber.

Q. Something which finds the way by itself; it does not go wide of the mark even though it is dark.
A. The hand. (Because it does not forget the mouth.)

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539

Q. One axe handle, but ten axe heads.
A. A bunch of bananas.

Q. A hut without a doorway.
A. An egg.

Q. Something you cannot tell whence it fell from.
A. A cloud.

Q. A little thing of such importance that, when you wish it, you go and take it with both hands.
A. A ground nut.

Q. An old fellow who cuts the grass with his belly, and smoothes it down with his back.
A. A spoon (used for dishing out the porridge).

Q. A tree which you cut down to-day, and the next it begins to sprout.
A. Hair.

Q. However far away it be, this very day this thing reaches there.
A. Memories.

Q. You go in this direction, I go in that, and we must meet.
A. A belt.

Q. Some great beast which dies in the dry season, and the scent of which reaches us here.
A. The first of the rains.

Q. The animals meet each other at the water (where they all come to drink).
A. Men and women. (When there is a common place for drawing water, where those from different villages get their supply.)

Q. A chief sent a person to bring a goat, and some maize, and a leopard, and when he came to the river, he found only a small boat, and he said, "What must I begin with? Should I begin with the leopard, the goat will eat the maize, and if I

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539 begin with the maize, the leopard will eat the goat, but I must begin with the goat." So he takes the goat and ferries it over, and again he began to think, saying, "Now, if I take the maize over, the goat will eat it, and should I take the leopard the goat will be eaten." Well, what did the man do?

A. First of all he ferried over the goat, it goes across, and he returns and takes the leopard, and also takes the goat back in the boat to the other side there, and leaves it there, taking over the maize, and comes back once more for the goat.

Some Proverbs

If water gets spilt, they do not gather it up.

Where a tree has fallen, you cannot hide the fall thereof.

That little you have is what you have eaten up beforehand; if you do not eat it up, it is some one else's. (*i.e.* "Let us eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die.")

O earth, I should not have eaten you (for yourself); I am only eating you because you are mixed up along with the honey.

You all start on an equality when it is a question of racing in the sand.

What has seen your friend to-day has gone off, to-morrow it will pay you a visit. (*i.e.* Do not laugh at a companion in trouble; your turn may come next.)

You gain wealth from my tusks, and yet you do not eat my flesh.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

535 755 782 787 feather head-dress, and in her hand she holds a little stick (for a spear), and her calico is tied round her waist, and her breasts swing free. The songs they sing at the Kanonomera dance go thus—

533 755 539 What knocks off the dew,
Comes at the early dawn.—(*Repeat.*)

Looking, gazing, we just gaze one at the other.
(*Repeat.*)

When the drum sounds it is the *choinjoli* drum that brings the spirit.—(*Repeat.*)

Far away there, far away,
Far away there, far away,
Far away where shines white that little cloud,
Far away there, is my bow.

Little quail, little quail, you are picking up the little grains.
And what if he is,
Are they not his eyes?
It broke his leg for him;
Only hunger, only hunger.

Oh no, indeed, indeed,
Two wives have been too many for him indeed;
Two wives have been too many for him indeed.

You hate me,
You hate me for my being so old.—(*Repeat.*)

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755
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Little maiden, whom war has given me,
Should you refuse to be mine,
I am as a slave in my grief,
And then what must you do?

We were far away;
Our companions had cut off their head rings.

XXVII

THE NTETEREZI DANCE

539
533
[764]

It is danced only at a funeral.

Scrape out the beer pot and give me.
Have some sense, the beer is finished.

He is the husband who favours your companion (*i.e.* his second wife),
And you, you only cook and give him, all in silence;
And here you return,
And weep against the hut post.

Should you be a childless man,
Do not be hitting your neighbour's child,
That's so, father.
Don't you think you should go and beat that maize you planted?
That's so, father.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 She has left him sleeping there, de de;
533 She has left the home he made her, de de;
She has left him.

The man who is in my home;
Yes, yes, father.
From the way he leans against the hut post (all indifferent to my charms)
You would think he had been drinking beer.

What, you say you would marry *me*?—
You of the goat-skin (loin cloth).
No, father; oh no, father;
You of the goat-skin.

Mother! mother!
Did she go to send you,
Saying, "When he comes you must abuse him?"

Oh stop that fidgeting and turning;
Stop saying, "I must so."
Stop saying, "I must thus."
We do not want that.

You have brought in vain your wooden pillow;
I do not wish you,
I do not want you.

Should you kill a little mouse, go and give it to your sister.
With one's wives it's do this, do that for them, and then they leave you.
We have said so; we have said so.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXVIII

THE KANDENGA DANCE

In dancing this dance the women stand in line on one side, the men in a line on another, the drums are where the men are; then a woman goes and takes the knobkerry from a man, and the man goes back with her to where the women are, and again they return and stand close together. The man places one hand on the woman's shoulder, and they dance thus, and when they have done dancing the woman turns round and hands the man his knobkerry. The Kandenga is danced at a funeral, but also just for fun when the moon is shining.

A white-haired man is malt;
On his coming, let him make beer;
Yes, father.
On his coming he shall make beer.

Towards the river to *Likongwe*
A cloud shines white like some little bird, maybe,
But it's those Angoni; they always said
"That's a rich little spot where the *Nsugudzi* flows."

I am an unmarried maiden, and one of Njolo's men will be my lord,
De, de.
The youths from here think too much of themselves.
Did not one say, I was his,
De, de.
The youths of here are too conceited.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

539 Place your hand upon her shoulder in the dance.
533 Place your hand up her shoulder whom you love.
This season there is no bow (*i.e.* war).

Oh, oh, oh.
I have come to the wedding.
The porridge they have cooked with the finger.
(It is so badly made.)

Oh belt, belt, belt,
Belt, belt,
Why should I not borrow the belt,
When the dance has sounded?

XXIX

THE CHITOTO DANCE

535 They dance it at a mourning, and even just for
[534] fun. They do not have drums, but fasten rattles on their legs.

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539 One perhaps has taken the other,
533 Summoned him for love of him,
And to-day we mourn, love;
Yes, father,
And the cock crows.

Should your neighbour's son not have a wife,
Look after his belly,
His belly,
His belly, wo, ha, ho!
I have sung.

6:Rattray E,G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

Should you have no child by your neighbour's daughter, 539 533
Give her your friend, and he shall wed her;
As for you, you be happy with the beer pot,
With the beer pot, wo, ha, ho!
You be content with the beer pot.

XXX

THE KUNJU DANCE

MEN do not dance it, but only women, with the men looking on. [535]

You, Nzinyai, you, Nzinyai,
Nzinyai, she refuses hospitality to the strangers,
You, Nzinyai.
The porridge which I have not seen;
Nzinyai, return whence you came.

The man who is in my hut begins to refuse his food; when I only dish him out two helpings of porridge, he looks aside;
When I dish him out three (he says), "Give me the water (to wash his hands). I shall give the child his."
But that child he is wise,
"Eat up your porridge," says he; "was it not you who scolded at me?"
Now, what do you think of that? My child he knows how to conduct a quarrel.
A quarrel they settle at the village court.

6:Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1900) 1907 FR5 Ngoni FR5

XXXI

OTHER SONGS

539
533 Moon, you must shine, shine that I may eat the tadpoles;
I sit on a stone, and my bones all rattle.
If it were not for my big mouth,
The maidens would be crying for me.
(The song of the night-jar.)

That great bird has gone in there,
Gone to the other side there,
Gone and got a snake there;
The very snake that told me of misfortune,
Told me of misfortune, e! e! e!
Which foretold evil at the site of the deserted village.

Frog you, frog you,
Your friend, your friend.
Frog you, frog you,
He is calling his wife.
Jump squat, jump squat,
He is calling his wife.
(The frog's song.)

Dawn, day; dawn, day;
The Tsambe mouse is finishing other folk's food.
(The song of the *ndongera* mouse, that eats during the day.)

Stay a little yet, night; stay a little yet, night;
While I eat with you.
(The song of the *Tsambe* mouse, that eats only at night.)

13:Fraser M-5 (ca. 1890) 1901
FR5 Ngoni FR5

their anger and propitiate them. Yet this recognition is not made in any degree of affection but in the times of dark necessity. When the rain has not fallen, when locusts swarm and eat up their crops, when sickness and death are abroad in the village, the spirits are working out their vengeance for being neglected. Then they are remembered and sacrifice is made. There are also certain ceremonial observances on important occasions. Before the gardens are hoed, and when the reaping time draws near; if an army is going out to battle, or when a coronation takes place, then prayer is made. The confusion of the old and new ideas was amusingly illustrated at the last coronation ceremony, when Mperembe, the eldest sub-chief, sacrificed a bull, and offering it to the spirit of the dead chief prayed him to bless the new chief, then added, "and, O Mombera, bless the teachers when they go about teaching the people the words of God." There was something very beautiful in this recognition of Christianity as but a fuller shining of the dim light they had.

Their old men are full of stories and traditions, some of them are uncommonly like the stories of Uncle Remus, and others with a curious echo of Old Testament story. There is a hill near Ekwendeni, where tradition says a great tower was built by the Tumbuka to reach into the moon. But the white ants ate away the foundation and the tower fell and the people were killed. I passed below this hill when I was on my way home, and chaffed my carriers on trying to build so great a tower with wood. They laughed, and said, "But do you know the story of the hill over there?" pointing to the north. No, I said, what is it? And they told me how that long ago the Tumbuka found the country too narrow, so they decided to climb into heaven and cultivate new gardens there. So they gathered the nation together and cut down all the trees, and began to build a huge tower on this hill. When they had got a great way up, some cried "Stop, we need build no more. Here is a ladder coming down out of heaven." And they looked up and saw great roots hanging down. So the people caught hold of these roots and began climbing hand over hand up to heaven. But suddenly while they were all climbing, the roots broke, and the nation fell to the earth and was snuffed out.

Like other children of nature there are men and women in the tribe who seem to have a wonderful gift of second sight. Forty years ago a regiment went out on a great raid. The witch doctor in blessing them told them that they would meet a white man